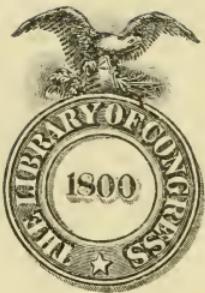


POEMS
LYRICAL & DRAMATIC
CROMWELL: A PLAY
SARA KING WILEY



Class PS 3545

Book I36 P7

Copyright No. 1900

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

POEMS

LYRICAL AND DRAMATIC

TO WHICH IS ADDED

CROMWELL: AN HISTORICAL PLAY

BY ✓

SARA KING WILEY

11

NEW YORK

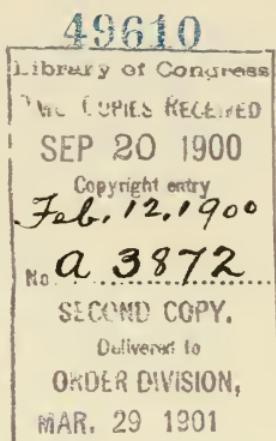
GEORGE H. RICHMOND

22 WEST 33D STREET

LONDON: CHAPMAN & HALL, LIMITED

1900

1



Copyright, 1900,
BY
SARA KING WILEY.

W. A. D. M. M. T.
W. A. D. M. M. T.

TO MY FATHER

William Halsted Wiley

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE FAUN	3
1898	
IN A POPPY GARDEN	9
" Scribner's Magazine," 1899	
AUSPICE, THE SPIRIT OF SPRING	II
1899	
WEDDING HYMN	15
1897	
THE ORIOLE	19
1896	
CLEOBULINE OF LINDOS	21
1896	
PYTHAGORAS	23
1895	
COROT'S "ORPHEUS"	24
" The Outlook," 1894	
FAME	25
" The Churchman," 1894	
" IT SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD AND THOU SHALT BRUISE HIS HEEL"	26
1893	

	PAGE
SONG: "AS MIRRORED IN THE TRANQUIL LAKE"	27
"Godley's Magazine," 1893	
SONG: "ALTHOUGH THOU STILL THY LOVE DENY"	27
1896	
IN PRAISE OF CHLORIS	28
1893	
THE SONG OF A YOUNG GIRL	30
1896	
SONGS OF THE SUMMER:	
1. In the Woods	32
2. By the Sea	33
1895	
THE VISION OF TOIL	35
1897	
GERVASE	39
1897	
TO THE SEA	46
1893	
APOLLO AND DAPHNE	52
"The Century Magazine," 1894	
ENDYMION	54
"Scribner's Magazine," 1894	
CLYTIE	56
1894	
PYGMALION AND GALATEA	59
1895	
PSYCHE AND EROS	62
1895	
BELLEROPHON	65
1896	
PROSERPINA: A SONG OF THE SPRING	68
"The Outlook," 1898	

	PAGE
THE LOVE TEST	71
1892	
BALLADS WRITTEN FOR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF	
THE "DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION":	
The Battle of Monmouth	80
1894	
What One Woman Did for the Battle of Lexington .	84
1893	
Columbus	86
"The Independent," 1894	
The Ballad of the General's Kiss	89
"The Ladies' Home Journal," 1898	
Washington at Trenton	93
1895	
CROMWELL: AN HISTORICAL PLAY	101
1893	
vii	

POEMS
LYRICAL AND DRAMATIC

THE FAUN

I SAW a faun!

An eerie faun, that danced along the woodland path,
All in the feathery freshness of the year,
An hour after dawn.

The sunbeams yet were pale and weak;
One lay, a shimmering silver streak,
Across the mossy path.

He wore a skin of dapple deer
About him flung,
And rosy-stemmed grape-vine,
To twist and twine,
By glossy leaves and tiny tendrils clung.

I've heard their ears are pointed fur,
Like the spring chestnut's silky bur;
I could not see what ears he had,
Because of all his bronze-brown hair
About his long neck rimpling down
Even to his shoulders bare.

His eyes were green and very bright,

Quick as a bird's apoise for flight;
His skin was softly brown.
Alert and graceful did he stray,
Swaying as lithe young birches sway—
He looked scarce humaner than they.
His lips were full, but wistful sad,
Curved with shy scorn,
And like his eyes they seemed to mourn
Some beauty lost or happiness.
But once a low branch brushed a tress
Of cool wet leaves across his brow,
And then a sudden laugh outrang,
As if a hundred thrushes sang—
O, I can hear it now!
The sad mouth slanted elfishly,
And all the pointed teeth, nut-white,
Gleamed merrily,
The wild eyes shutting tight
In wrinkles of delight.
I laughed out rude, and off ran he!

Some say they have no souls at all, these fauns,
But hark!
I'll tell you what I've never told before—
I know 'tis true: (you need not wink and nod!)
He's half a god!

Once in mid-June, and just before the dark,
I watched for him.

The woods were hot and still and full of scent,
Green in the twilight dim;
The sunset pink flushed the white heaven's floor
With fiery flakes besprent.

I heard him down where rill and river meet,
Fluting upon his pipe—

O, sweet, sweet, clear and sweet,
Clearer than quail when grain is ripe,
A flowing note that seemed the very breath

That the soft summer saith
Low to herself when evening rises slow

From dell and hollow to the shining sky.

O, pure and smooth in mystic loveliness,
A singing wanderer that soared to press
Into the holy secret of the woods,
Peace of the woods,

That over all, immeasurable, broods.

Lapsing in subtle change, the melody
Slipped into breaks forlorn,

And sobbed as if he fell to think on death,
To mourn and mourn

That all things fair shall fade away and die;
And every strain

Thrilled out to cry and sigh,

Pain and complain,
So sad, so bitter sad—
Surely a human heart the creature had!
Then brave and beautiful the rippling ran
Like brooks that fall in foam,
Exulting streams whose source no man can scan,
That laugh and laugh, and roam
Forever in the woods, forever free,
Whose tiny throats still prophesy the sea.
So marvellous sweet, I wept in joy and fear,
Nor dared to draw anear.
I went next day and wandered through the place:
I found no faun, but one blurred hoof-print's trace,
And one more certain token—
The slender plumy reeds were hacked and broken.

I thought to see him soon,
But watched through long, long months before he
came,
Until September's floss and flame
Across the hills blew glimmering,
And lily-white the harvest moon
Spilt silver frost-light in the wood.
Once, as I stood
Dipping up water from the spring,
I saw through lucid drops that fell,

Scarring my red cheeks in the well,
A wavering form with shoulders hunched,
Legs all too long and head down-bunched,
That leaped and pranced,
And with its long black shade before it danced.
Hope rose within my heart—a golden dawn!
Panting, I ran to see: it was my faun!
He trod as high as if his agile feet,
Like the deer fleet,
Had hoofs instead of toes,
And as a leaf falls fell his steps so light,
Unechoing as rain;
The shadow wriggling as a black stream flows.
But O, I followed crazy with delight,
Heavily patterning loud.
He sprang aloft, and bowed
Until his hair, bronze even in the pallid light,
Dropped in his eyes like a bright mane,
And then off darted he again!

I cannot love my old playfellows now,
The plodding rustics kind and good—
I have forgotten how.
They smell of musty hay, not the fresh wood;
They bring ruddy apples or a pear,
Or ribbons from the fair,

That every silly bumpkin gives his lass.
I hate their clumsy feet and round blue eyes,
I hate their lumpish fruits and fopperies;
I'd rather have fresh dewberries strung on grass.
I wonder if my faun would think me fair?
I'm plump and short and strong, with silk-smooth hair
Abundant, waveless brown;
My skin is amber as a peach; my lips and cheeks are
poppy-red.
I'm not a fragile lily or pale rose,
But like the gypsy tulip whose gold head
With scarlet dash in each full petal glows.
For me these country folk are slow and dull;
O, but my faun was beautiful!

Some day when Spring is here in showers,
And wimpling rain blows on light flowers,
And all the new pale green is budding sweet,
I'll find again the print of dancing feet;
His pointed toes will mark the ground,
Though the moist mosses give no sound.
But I shall follow on his track
Into the warm, wet forest, far and far,
Where all the wild things are,
And never, never shall come back!

IN A POPPY GARDEN

BEYOND the gold-green lane the poppy garden
Flutters and flaunts, like sunset seas aglow.
The frosty, fuzzy stalks and blue leaf banners
Ranging in row on row.

Here are some multi-petaled, ruby crimson,
Into a crumpled purple withering,
Like tattered velvet old and dim and dusty
Of a neglected king.

Whiter are these than are the moon-white lilies;
Censers that dainty fragrances exhale;
Each, when the early sun fills with his ardor,
Beams like a Holy Grail.

Pure, pure and shining gold these silk-smooth gob-
lets,
Brimming with drowsy, heady scents to steep
The bold inbreathing spirit in gold visions,
Bright mysteries of sleep.

And here, O, here, are they the best belovèd,
Scarlet and splendid as the soul's desire,
With smouldered hearts hot from the glorious,
daring

Welcome of the sun's fire.

“ O, happy dreamer in the poppy garden,
Under the soft, sweet sky of summer blue,
O, happy dreamer in the poppy garden,
When will your dreams come true?”

“ For every dream in this my poppy garden
A springing hope within my heart began;
Hopes are quick seeds of the world's wide garden,
Lord of whose life is man.”

AUSPICE, THE SPIRIT OF SPRING

THERE came a light, of gold and crystal blent,
There came a wandering wind as soft as down,
 Laden with scent
Fresher than tawny earth, where seedcups brown
Wear bright drops pearling down
Or pendent on their floss like diamond,
 Fragrant as pines
 With satin spines
Or fuzzy fern's uncurling frond.

Last night there fell the last snow of the year;
But the sun rose in heavens silver-clear
That, as the day swept on, at zenith grew
Vivid and glorious in dazzling blue.
The little sparkling snow-shower on the grass,
That flecked the meadowland, did swiftly pass,
And left mud shining and a wannish sheen
Across the stubble, green, the coming green!
The sharp air bore the tang of frost till noon,

And then there blew—most like a subtle tune
Through whirling notes—a warm sweet breath, to
bring
A promise and a savor of the Spring.

There is a lazy beauty in the hours,
Flowing like strains of song heard half asleep,
Till on a morn the woods blow white with flowers
And through the sluggish senses stir and creep
New little joys, like violet butterflies
Whose life in torpor lies
Until the warm, warm sun shall bid them peep.

Half in remembrance, half in hope we yearn
And faint for fairer things, and mourn,
With vague unrest forlorn,
All that may not return.
The silver sliver of the moon,
Glistening, recalls the beamy moon complete.

O Spring, come soon, come soon!
With bloomy grasses powdering quick feet,
And mists of green down distant forest aisles,
And starry smiles
Of golden marigold;
And between whiles
The whiffs of warm wind and the rush of cold.

All seems a symbol and a prophecy,
And brings the haunting hopes of good to be.
This, this, in all swift loveliness, shall pass,
 Behold, behold,
The petals flutter snowflakes on the grass,
The gay green grass, shall yet grow gray in death!
 'Tis but a hint, a clue,
A mystery the Spirit quickeneth
 And, rising through
These frail sweet things of earth, sublimely saith:
"This is a glimpse toward perfection; see
How every man must hope for it, and turn
From all things all unsatisfied, to rise
As amber flames, light leaping as they burn;
Deeper than cheerful green of grass it lies,
Born every year with Spring, our paradise.
The sullen clay beneath us seems to quake
 And into beauty wake,
From silver into fire the sunbeam flies.
O heart of all that doth obscurely move,
 This is thy high birthright,
 This thy celestial lure;
And from the base obsession of crude might,
 From things impure,
 From every lie
 On selfish aim intent,

From all unhallowed laws,
Cruelties that oppress,
The yet unconquered health of happiness,
From these the world shall gloriously be free.
Only do thou in blissful sacrifice
 Leave all the low content,
 Girding thee for the fight,
The bloodless wars to make man's joys increase,
Nor early smile and think the battle won:
 If any have not ease,
 Leave thou no peace
 Beneath the sun.
So shalt thou have no more regret nor pain
 When flowers fall:
Springs yet more exquisite shall bloom again
 And bloom for all.
Long lowered eyes shall lift that dawn to see,
And every creature feel delight its home.
Till then, till then our constant prayer shall be,
 ‘O Love, thy kingdom come! ’ ”

WEDDING HYMN

TO AN APRIL BRIDE

Ιψοι δὴ τὸ μέλαθρον
'Υμήναον
ἀέρρετε τίκτοντες ἄνδρες.
'Υμήναον.
γάμβρος ἐρχεται ἵσος Ἀρει,
'Υμήναον
ανδρος μεγάλω πòλυ μείζων.
'Υμήναον.

Epithalamium: Sappho.

RAISE triumphant voices high,
Shake the rafters with your cry,
Hymen, hail, O Hymen!

Strew ye violets snow-white,
White as she we lead this night;
Daffodils that less can hold
Sunbeams than her curls of gold!

Hymen, hail, O Hymen!
See, she comes! As softly wakes
Sense enthralled when music breaks
On sleeping silence, doth she start

Dulcet love in every heart.
Free your songs as wild birds fly,
Soaring, circling joyously,
 Hymen, hail, O Hymen!
Strew ye showers of Spring bloom sweet,
Wind-flower petals round her feet,
Snowdrops and hepaticas,
Purple, rose, and silver stars,
Cups the storm-wind cannot freeze,
Sanguine-flushed anemones.
Fill the air with perfumes light,
Fill the air with petals white,
Sailing slow as she sweeps by,
Spinning as the snowflakes fly.
 Hymen, hail, O Hymen!
Let us pray that time forbear
E'er to blanch that golden hair,
E'er to steal away the rose
On her sweet soft cheek that glows;
Yet if such his purpose fell,
All his power immutable
Shall not touch her fairest part,
Cannot harm her flower-sweet heart.
Slow as dawn she draweth nigh,
Buds and blossoms drifted lie.
 Hymen, hail, O Hymen!

Come thou like Proserpine, that leaves behind
The sunless Winter and the chilling wind,
And, while the verdure spreads and bluebirds sing,
Leads on the Spring.

Thus to a wakening world, unseen, untrod,
Thy path goes beaconed by bright Love the God,
And in thy heart and in thy life, behold,
New beauties shall unfold.

Folded with lace white as a cloud,
Gently she waits in her maidenliness,
Under the wreath low her head bowed.
Haste, noble bridegroom, her waiting to bless!
Lo, where he cometh, proud over all,
Gay in his triumph, than Ares more tall!
We give that hold her precious past measure,
Take her, enfold her, thine is the treasure;
Now do we leave her close at thy side,
She, the desire of all, is thy bride.
Joy, like a brook bubbling along,
Laugh on thy pathway with freshening tides—
Joy like to flame, flashing and strong,
Joy like to starlight that changeless abides!

O God of Love, approach, this wedlock bless,
And consecrate this bond of holiness;

That never-ceasing grace this deed may bear,
Endow with growing love this perfect pair.
Behold, how soon the little time is sped,
The sacred words that make them one are said.
The bridegroom waits to take her to his home;
“O, girt about with love, love-heralded,
Into the gates of love, Belovèd, come!”

THE ORIOLE

Non so se s'è l'immaginata luce.

“ This fire that burns my heart I cannot find ;
Nor know the way, though some one seems to lead.”

Michael Angelo.

I HEAR the oriole singing in the heat
Of brilliant sunlight on a noon of May,
And o'er and o'er one thrilling tune repeat
As if he loosed his heart into the lay.

Even such a lilting burst of melody
As stirred the soul of Siegfried with desire,
Foretelling where his waiting love would be,
Encircled by the mystery of fire.

Ah, we that wander 'neath the wandering sun,
Wearying with the jar and noise of strife,
We are alone, ay, lonely every one,
And seeking, seeking life beyond our life.

Not all in vain thy golden accents fall,
Sweet bird, for beauty never comes in vain;

High is the summons of thine airy call
To triumph over fear and doubt and pain.

Thou voice of longing, hope is born of thee;
The heart's undying hope thy strain doth move;
Thou art to every soul a prophecy
There yet shall be a perfecting of Love.

CLEOBULINE OF LINDOS

καὶ ποθήω καὶ μάομαι.

Sappho.

My tongue less sweetly syllabled must speak
Even but a little, though the harsh words move
Not to the fluting cadence of thy Greek;
Sweet sister, I am one with thee in love,
In hopeless love; me also life doth wrong,
This wrong of wrongs. She the bright web that
wove,
The soft Queen, smiling still and subtle strong,
Hath bound me unto love and unto song.

I yearn and seek, mourning the sweet sad ways
Of green and tender growths blooming to fade;
Roses that curl and flush, the snow-wind slays;
The shy and helpless creatures of the glade
Stir also tears of wonder and distress,
They perish painfully, so fairly made,
Their lithe wild bodies quick with happiness
Waste, and there comes no power to aid or bless.

Say, could the clear bright moon lighting the sky,
Or rhythmic motion of some gracious thing,
Or cool winds scattering perfume as they fly
From hyacinth and crocus of the Spring,
Or sparkling freshness of the wide-sunned sea,
Or music of thy voice, when thou didst sing
That strain, *thou lovest another more than me*—
O sister, could all beauty comfort thee?

PYTHAGORAS

SWAYING on branches of the apple-tree

In pale sunshine and warm sweet air of May,
Near robin's bubbling burst of roundelay,
Where plunged in rosy buds low hums the bee,
I know thy secret—life is melody.

Below the clustering wreaths of bridal bloom
A white moth flickers in the cool green gloom,
And, silent, lo, creation sings to me.

O thou, the “ gold-dust ” of whose thought yet gleams
On time's rough highway worn with following feet,
In mystic staves of solemn and of sweet
The music thou hast heard forever streams.

And thou, the pure, hard by that truth hast trod,
That deep in nature beats the heart of God.

COROT'S "ORPHEUS"

THE forest is enwrapped in mysteries,
The trees are shadowy in the lingering night,
Dim and immeasurable the twilight skies,
Across the hills the silver morning light.
The temple walls are pallid, far away,
Where in the east the spreading lustre gleams.
The poet waits the dawning of the day,
And knows not if he lives or if he dreams.
A clearer vision comes, a glorious birth
And deepening waves of sense upon him roll
Till all the beauty of the quiet earth,
As sweet as distant music, fills his soul.
The chains that hold his speech are strained and riven,
And whirling words arise that beat and ring;
With burning heart he lifts his lyre to heaven
And praises God that he was born to sing!

FAME

THOU art unto the warrior a dream
Of brilliant battle, where, 'mid cannon's roar,
The charging throngs with banners high before
Shout "Victory!" while the loud trumpets scream.
Unto the orator thy visions seem
The silent multitude, whose eyes adore
The master that can pierce the hid heart's core,
And bid their laughter wake or quick tears stream.

But to the poet, lo, thou art a hope
That unto youth this glorious earth may shine
More lovely, and to those on life's dark slope
May come a comfort, through his song's sweet breath,
And brighter and more near beam lights divine,
Long after he lies low in silent death.

“ IT SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD AND THOU
SHALT BRUISE HIS HEEL ”

HE was a stranger to this world of ours
That long in thoughtful silence gazed; he saith,
With wisdom, “ Here are two contending powers,
Love and death.”

Since from the Abyssm’s incommensurate side
This earth took form, with stars that wheel above,
That light whence beauty’s rainbow hues divide
Is but love.

All earth’s corruption, agony and sin,
That hideous, mirthless, bestial, grovelleth,
That which writhes low thine inmost soul within
Is but death.

He was a stranger to this world of ours
That long in thoughtful silence gazed; he saith,
With wisdom, “ Here are two contending powers,
Love and death.”

SONG

As mirrored in the tranquil lake
The bending lily's cup appears,
As echoing from surrounding hills
The singing swain his music hears,
Thus every glance and every tone
My heart doth answer to thine own.

SONG

ALTHOUGH thou still thy love deny,
And still my love disdain,
Passion that lifts the soul so high
Went never forth in vain.

And though more sad may seem my days,
Fate cannot tear from me
My chiefest joy, my highest praise—
The love I bear to thee.

IN PRAISE OF CHLORIS

AH, poor Narcissus, perishing
Of love beside the woodland spring,
Where, painted on the waters bright,
Thy dimpling beauty charms thy sight,
Had Chloris only passed that way
Thou still wouldest be alive to-day;
Thine image, though so wondrous fair,
Could never with her face compare.
Thou bendest low thy nymph to kiss,
And then the taunting sweet to miss,
For on thy mouth the icy stream,—
A touch hath shattered all thy dream,
And long the rocking waters show
A wild distortion, calming slow.
Lo, when my Chloris I would greet,
Her lifted eyes my stooping meet.
Thy pouting lips are red as wine,
Her lips are redder than are thine;
And smooth as roses ere they blow,

O, sweet and warm! and soft as snow.
And when thy voice thy loved one cries,
Cool echo in a whisper dies;
The tone of Chloris, like a wire
Smote on by Cupid's touch of fire,
Through all my soul in tremor thrills,
And rising song my being fills!

THE SONG OF A YOUNG GIRL

THEY say that love is like a brook
That changes from its wonted ways,
And leaves its green and mossy nook
To wither in the shady dell,
And through lush grass its pathway strays.
How can I tell, my heart, how can I tell?

They say that man no passion knows
That is unmixed with lower mood,
That in his purest flame there glows
The fire that lights the deeps of hell,
Nor can he rise sublimely good.
How can I tell, my heart, how can I tell?

They say that though love's wings of fire
Shall lift my soul to crystal air,
Soon, soon those wings shall surely tire;
On level earth earth's children dwell,
Such love is fleet as it is fair.
How can I tell, my heart, how can I tell?

And since I know my heart is wild,
Is wild and young, perhaps untrue,
Shall I, by tender words beguiled
(Whose power, alas! I know full well),
Bestow a gift we both may rue?
How can I tell, my heart, how can I tell?

SONGS OF THE SUMMER

I. IN THE WOODS

SOFT rushings overhead, light waverings
More still than silence, on the wind there floats
The far-off cadence of a bird that sings
In overrunning joy three fluting notes.
Gold on the blue, in lucent clear relief
Are poised the leaves; touched by the breeze, they
bound
And, leaping down from quivering leaf to leaf,
The sunlight drops, adazzle, to the ground.
Scents of the fern and pine breathe from the mold,
The wind is sweeping through the forest. Hark!
Here stands a beech-tree, shattered, gray and old,
The sun-spots brilliant on its mottled bark.
O glorious green world of life and light,
O world of joy and liberty and truth,
Forever passing on, forever right,
Noble in age and beautiful in youth!

Seek thou thy comfort in the woods, O man,
Nor mourn nor dream, but learn at length to be;
Rise unto toil formed from a nobler plan,
Free from thy lesser self, sublimely free.

II. BY THE SEA

FRESH blows the salt breath of the breezes past
Across the sea, and lo, before mine eyes,
Flashing with flakes of light that skim and play,
The tumbled azure waters, vast and vast,
Outstretching to the boundary of skies,
Where waves against its paler blue arise.

A billow heaving slow in lucent green
Comes on, with crest that topples, till the spray
White-mirrored in the dripping sand is seen;
Crashing it breaks, and all along the beach
Runs up the foam!

The sand-dunes, far as lifted glance may reach,
Lie piled in tawny drifts; the sea-gulls roam,
Lazily circling; now upon the ear,
The pause and rush and roar
Stunning no more,
Comes peace from out the tumult; sounding clear,
The voice of ocean hear.
O, the belovèd voice of the great sea,
That speaking to my restless spirit, saith:

“ Even as I,
Thus shalt thou be,
Utterly free;
There is no failing and there is no death;
Behold and see that beauty cannot die!
Hark, for I say the splendor of our God
Is all about thee, in the wind, the flood,
The raiment of the earth, the gleaming sky,
In each least particle; yea, in the whole;
Yea, in thy soul.”

THE VISION OF TOIL

WHEN the golden light flooded the woods, sifting
down through the maze
Of the leaves and far falling through all the green
wandering ways,
With the dew on his brow from cool brushing of
branches, the boy
Heard, like ringing of trumpet's loud-blown sound,
the calling of joy.
The quick laughter of brooks, bubbling notes of the
birds, seemed a part
Of the happiness stirring the soaring of song from
his heart.
And his guide was Hope, passing on volatile feet swift
as light,
Till there shone on before the fair face, O, most dread
and most bright,
Of that Beauty, the glory of glories, the distant de-
sire;
And beholding, the love of her rose like a tempest-
blown fire.

Round about her a swaying of melody, flowing, out-
broke
In a strain of low thrilling enchantment, and in him
there woke
The great longing that deep in the deep heart of man
silent dwells
Till the bright voice of music its wonder and ravish-
ment tells.
Then the quiring of winds and the sweet sound of
waters became
As the chanting of praise that extolled his victorious
name,
And a rapturous pride in his triumph exulting up-
swelled
As he sprang with arms reaching to hold her thus
clearly beheld.
Then the sky, of the silver of April when warm the
wind weaves
With the freshness of Spring the light scent of the
buds and new leaves,
Became, even as in twilight of Winter, keen blue,
hyaline,
When the breath of the frost clears the air and few
splendid stars shine.
And a shadowy white through the gloom, sudden
present as fear,

Barring even one footfall's advance, mouth to mouth
pressing near,
Seeming stone to the touch of warm flesh in quick
loathing recoil,—
The great spirit of Toil!
And his voice was like storm clamoring through
wide valleys aloud,
And his face like the solemn blue heaven when void
of all cloud.
While his rapid grasp held the young hands all
aquierer with desire:
“ Nay, nay, thou must struggle with me until even
I tire
And loose thee and serve thee and love thee, made
sweet by thy stress,
Yea, even I, pitiless!
Unto her the great pain of whose love is more lovely
than bliss,
Unto her, the Ideal, is none other pathway than this;
If a lesser than she can suffice as the hope of thy
heart,
Thou canst dwell on unharmed where thou art;
But as strong as the surge of the sea must be those
that attain,
And earth's greatest win only unto her grown glori-
ous through pain;

Nor shall any pass onward that dares not be bold
unto strife,
And he that within him bears not springing sources
of life
(That which puts forth the green of the Spring and
drives through the bright range
Of the seasons), quick soul of all beauty, the infinite
change,
The unmoved, the creative, he cannot endure the
fierce heat
And the searching lithe flames of my war, and falls
dead at my feet;
Or lives only my servitor, passionless, dumb and
afraid,
Growing deaf with the noise of my thunders, and
dwindles, to fade
To a gatherer up of the dust that my conquerors
have made."

GERVASE

Lost in the green heart of bright Summer woods,
Two lovers, hand-linked, stay their wanderings,
And listen to the murmurous hush that broods
Low in grass coverts brushed of passing wings.
They gaze above on leaves and clustered leaves,
Arch beyond arch, until the far blue sky
Shines over gleaming greens that the wind heaves
And stirs, and lets the shafted sunbeams fly
And glister through. Few words and soft they
breathe
For in the stillness love is quivering.
Now the long golden light shoots underneath
The branches, and a twilight bird doth sing
A single fluting strain once and again,
And still and still again, a tone to tell
Of joy too holy and too sweet a pain
For rude-cut words, and as the pure notes swell
It seems the voice of love grown audible.
Across the paling azure clouds ablush

Drift swiftly off; the solemn tree-trunks gray
Are purpling in the gloom; leaves catch the flush
And flame from out the west where fails the day.

The moon is white as pearl and lustreless,
And evening scents and tremors rise and fill
The dim sweet woods. Locrine with tenderness
Draws fair Yvonne all gently closer still.

A crash breaks on the quiet; galloping,
A great steed bursts through brush and fern, to rear
And down to earth his fainting rider fling
Even at their feet. "It is Gervase de Vere,
Our friend, Locrine! for aid, speed in thy flight.
Lo, how he bleeds!" She binds with gentle touch
Her silken scarf about the wounded knight,
The while her lover, catching at a clutch
The trailing rein, leaps on the rampant brute,
Grinds down the bit, and conquers and is gone!

The crack of boughs and thud of hoofs grows mute;
And fearful by the wounded man, Yvonne
Tries thrice to lift his heavy head, atoss
With fever, even so far as to her knees.

His bright curls catch the leaves from out the moss.
Then, guided by its bubbling stream, she sees
A glimmering little pool, and, moistening
Her kerchief, bathes his broad brow and closed eyes.

And still she hears the bird unchanging sing

The dulcet call of love. A sudden rise
The fringed lids; Gervase looks in her face.
He tells of conflict, many miles away,
Fought with vile robbers in an evil place;
His wounded horse the rein would not obey,
But bore him off, exhausted with his pain.
She says Locrine is gone for aid, and soon
He shall have leech's skill at home. Again
Their voices hush; the brightening silver moon
Casts soft and misty radiance through the trees,
And here and there are pools of shimmering light
Upon the mosses; in the rising breeze
The leaves, astir and dancing, glister bright.
Then speaks Gervase: "Yvonne, my heart-veins
flow,
And sure am I release from life draws near;
Therefore, what none but thou shall ever know
Now may I speak in honor and no fear."
It seems he seeks some tender perfect word
To call her: finding none, he feebly holds
His open hand. She, weeping, that has heard
Never from him such speech, warmly enfolds
His fingers, stooping till a loose brown curl
Falls on his brow. With tense lips quivering
He strives to form the words, "My girl, my girl,"
And, choking, ceases. On his wide-spread wing

A great bat swoops and dives and then is gone;
While, gazing through her tears down on his face,
 Silent and wondering sits the fair Yvonne.
His eyes on hers flash with a deep fierce fire,
 And his great voice breaks out in wrath and woe:
“What profit is of high or low desire?
 Nothing but scorn have I that love you so!
This thing indeed I shall not understand,
 Why love is given, given thus in vain,
Poured out like wine upon a desert sand;
 Wine of my bruised heart, purple wine of pain.
Before I saw you my full life was sweet,
 I was renowned in peace, adored in strife;
I lost the love of conquest at your feet,
 Found grieving love, and lost the love of life.
O, never thine the blame, though great the cost
 I pay: my joy and peace, my strength and fame,
Like trifles nothing worth aside were tossed
 When the great tyrant to my heart's throne came.
O, for the hope of serving thee, the chance
 Of giving into thy dear hand even one
Least thing that might thy happiness enhance,
 I had borne anything, Yvonne, Yvonne!”
Pressing the hand that gently holds her own,
 The memory of like words slips swift between
The knight's cry, till in soft unconscious tone

She murmurs from her thoughts the name "Loc-rine."

Bravely he bears the pang bravely to speak:

" Yea, thou and Love have made the choice aright,
Nor would I change the fate though this heart break;

 A fitter spouse than I, that gay young knight.
I am not old, but life has used me ill,

 And love of you has seemed my youth to drain:
He loves and is beloved, and pleasures fill

 His sparkling eyes, undimmed by tears of pain.
And yet he has for thee no love so great

 As I that hopeless gave. Be this my boast:
I did not shrink before a certain fate:

 I gave my all, and I have loved the most.
I cannot see an end; no seer can show

 Why one should lose life's only gift of worth;
It is not just, not just! I cannot know,

 I am of earth, and I return to earth."

The wind that soars above the dense growth free

 Roars out and rushes on with dwindling sound,
In diapason like the rolling sea,

 Through the vast forest shakes the leaves to
 ground.

The tumult calms him; in soft accents now

 His voice comes, and with patient mouth, and gaze
Of patient eyes, filling with tears, that slow

Slip down his cheek, lies the strong knight Ger-vase.

“Would I forego for any sacrifice
This night with thee and all the sweets thereof?
I have ill spoken; bought with any price,
He pays too little that attains to love.”

His chest works, and the mighty muscles play
Beneath her arm, yet breaks there forth no groan.
“I have gone forward on the unknown way,
O thou great Love, toward Thy goal unknown.
I feel I have gone forward through this pain,
Therefore I am content that these things be.

Strong guiding Spirit that o'er man doth reign,
I am thy child, surely I am with Thee.”

And then in fainter voice he speaks: “Yvonne,
I thank you for your grace this night, and pray
The noble youth your noble heart that won
May make you happy all a long life's day.
Go now unto the spring, I am athirst.”

He grasps her cold hand hard, his own more cold;
“Would brave Locrine forbid you kiss me first?”

Gently she draws her fingers from his hold
And lifts him mother-wise in firm embrace,
The warm soft pressure of her lips he feels,
Her tears and his are mingled on his face,
And to his paining heart a comfort steals.

Then running to the spring she strives to fill
A cup of leaves, and there some time is sped
Ere she returns, pausing, he lies so still,
And lo, his mantle drawn about his head.
Fearful she moves not, till with tramp and shout
Locrine with men and litter comes amain,
Who raises up the mantle, then about
The heavy form winds the stained cloak again,
And clasps Yvonne beneath his arm to kiss;
But she cries low: "Thou dost not fruitless fall
Oh brave Gervase! High Love's reward is this:
Who goes forth faithful leaves new hope for all!"

TO THE SEA

ONE with the soul of man art thou, O Sea,
And that dear voice that through his being thrills
In lonely ways, in solemn afternoon,
When the blue light dwells on the rolling hills
Like some deep tune;
Or when in daisied fields he wanders free
Less echoeth his soul than voice of thee,
Low murmuring many woofèd memories,
And soft with whisperings of mysteries.
Afar from thee he hears it in his dreams,
And faints and longs
To reach the rushing of thine azure streams
Whose glory makes the heavens wan and dim,
The dazzling lights that flash and skim
In glittering throngs
The sibilants thy hissing foam recites.

When thy true lover cometh unto thee
By thy wave-furrowed marge,
His heart with impulse large

Upswelling, and his eyes, lifted wearily,
Roam rested on thy spaces, thou great Sea!
The early day in beamy azure fair
Pours dimming light from the full fount of heaven.
Loosing the heated bands of angry life
By thy free spirit riven,
He yields him utterly unto thy sway.
He draws deep breaths of sparkling sunlit air;
The balmy wind that blows
A hand of cool caressing lightly lays
Upon his brow hot with unjoyous strife
And chafing care.
He looks across thy waters where they shine
And break upon the beach, a foaming line,
Till, ere he knows
Whence the deep comfort flows,
His sorrow slips from off him unaware,
And his soul sings within him as he goes.

And now the vivid noon burns white in heaven,
The wind roars in across the foaming crest
That, into streamers blown,
Is shredded fast and driven,
And through it versicolored rainbows thrown;
The bubbling stream comes on, the waves divide.
Wild Sea, thy tumult echoes in his breast!

Companion of the soul unsatisfied,
He longs to cast himself to thy embrace.
The violent cold wind his coat tears wide,
Whips it away in gusts from side to side
And drives salt spray against his burning face.
Up sweeps the thin tongue of the creeping tide
And blots his footprints as he steps apace.
Forever seeking pause, forever driven,
The waters stir and sigh in peaceless flow—
As man who joys in naught that life has given,
Since change, the pitiless, bids all things go.
He feels the constant motion of the world
That fareth forward, knowing not of rest,
And through the vast, unmeasured void is whirled
Forever on its unknown journey pressed
By some unknown behest.
Far out the waves rise, roistering in fume,
Marbled with foam and hurrying on and on;
The currents meet, up bursts the whizzing spume,
And when the beach is won,
Reverberant the breaker smites the shore,
And gripes the ground with awful clutching hand,
Breaks forth with clangor crash the sullen roar;
The glimmering silver of the dripping sand
In shivered crystal sparkles in the light.
With broadening sense

There comes upon the gazer on thy might
A swift revulsion from his restless woe,
A longing wild and tense
To spend his force, to battle with the foe
The thrill of power, the flush of fierce delight
Of one that, standing on a far-spread plain,
Feels earth and air all palpitant with fright,
Who hears amain
The heavy trampling of the oncoming train
And glows with exultation for the fight.
Deep, deep the human impulse lies,
The love of war, the love of strife,
Nor touch of bland and golden destinies
Can tear those clinching roots from out man's life.
There by the ceaseless striving of the sea,
From out its storm to man the outcry came:
"O, glorious and free,
Consume thy barriers like reluctant flame,
Breast thou the tempest, thou that shalt command,
Buffet a pathway through the press round fame,
To tear the laurels from her listless hand!"

Thou Ocean! To the measure of what dance
Dost thou thy sounding step attune?
Unto what mystic consonance
Accords thy rune?

Thy rhythm antiphonal
In steady rise and fall,
With chime and beat
Of rhyme and feet
Comes like the answer to an unheard call.
Is this the harmony that since the prime
Dwells in unvarying cadence at the core of time?
In him that listens to thee long alone,
Thy pause and rush as tides incoming climb,
There vibrates a responding tone
That like thine own
Seems thrilling from some finger-touch sublime.
The low intoning of thy solemn song,
The murmurous rush and ripple on the beach,
Lulls soon the soothèd soul with opiate strong;
He ponders thoughts too deep and still for speech;
Until with dazèd eye
He sees the distant ships float by
With windless sails unfurled:
No more he habits the disquiet world.
Across the warmèd sand the sweet salt breath
Of ocean breathes abroad a dreamful spell,
As on the moving waters borne along
It seems he slipped the leash of sleep and fell
Far past the purple boundaries to death.
The wetted sand in burnished bronzes glows,

And far across the azure distance there
The dazzling sun-wake flows,
A silver mantle shaken in the glare.
The clouds, upgathered, flush to deepening rose;
And now the day commingles with the night;
A globe of crimson light,
The sun drops down the heavens gray and bare,
And in the orient, the moon's broad targe
Gleams as the pearly vapors past her glide.
The silver snakes writhe on the crumpled marge
Of breakers, and a glittering line
Beneath the curling wave doth shine.
And farther on the steady swinging tide
Of darkness, lo, a pathway glimmers wide.
Nor thoughts of life are here, nor dreams divine;
Here stillness and eternal peace abide.

O vast and sombre waves sublimely onward thrown,
Dim unimagined deeps of dark that lie
Beneath the keen blue of the starless sky,
Thy power is like the power of death—unknown:
Yet this he knows who feels thy strength a part
Of that great mystic Strength that holds his heart—
Symbol and sign of mighty Love thou art.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

UNDER the morning skies,
Across the meadow see the maiden pass.
She flies, she flies;
O Daphne, be thou fleet!
The rosy little feet
Wet with the cold dews glistening on the grass.
Apollo, gleaming, follows on her track
With head thrown forward, and bright curls blown
back.
His singing voice rings forth, “ Alas! alas!
Stay, sweet! stay, sweet!
I am no hawk, fair dove;
I love, I love! ”
The amorous words go whistling on the wind.
She hears, and with a frightened glance behind,
Forcing her strength, starts onward with a bound;
Her pressed foot spurns a violet from the ground:
He does not touch the earth; the grass is stirred
As by the near approach of some swift bird.

Now but a step his outstretched hand debars.
She seeks the river sparkling in the sun,
Drives up the splashing spray, a shower of stars.
The god springs forward. Ah, she's won!
His kisses fall upon her tangled hair;
For down she bends her head upon his breast,
And cries, "Oh, help me, Father!" in despair.
He feels her stiffen in his hold;
The silky locks on which his cheek doth rest,
To light leaves turning, flutter thin and cold;
The quivering limbs are pliant stems of bay;
His soft lips press rough bark, which shrinks away.
"Still shalt thou be my love," Apollo cries,
"My favored wreath!" and plucks the slender leaves.
A soft wind stirs the branches, and low sighs
The tree, as though the loveless Daphne grieves.

ENDYMION

ACROSS the deep blue of the Summer sky
Slow sweeps the silver moon, the night has flown
Beneath the forest branches, shadows lie
Black, in the hollows where the leaves have blown.
Sudden a twig snaps; from the wood's dark side
Darts forth the huntress; heaving is her breast,
But closed her firm lips, though her nostrils wide
Swell with her panting breath. Her eye's unrest
Notes a prone form—the wearied stag, perchance!
She plunges through the grass, and as she creeps
Grasps close her spear, when her amazed glance
Falls on Endymion, sighing as he sleeps.
His bright head pillow'd on his bended arm,
His chin tipped high that she may mark the curve
Of red lips and long lashes, and the warm
Glow on his cheek and the relax'd nerve
Of that brown hand dropped on his moving chest.
She stands as in a trance, and first that night
Forgets to heed the sport she loves the best,

With all her senses shrunken into sight.
Unconsciously her hand pressed on her heart,
As flower-petals quiver in the wind
Her sweet lips tremble, fallen just apart.
She bendeth down and her long locks unbind
And dropping almost sweep the sleeper's face;
Close in one hand the soft dark mass compressed
She clutches carelessly and holds in place.
Her white arms crossing then upon her breast
Lower she stoops, and on his brow there falls
A touch like brushing leaves. Wide snap his eyes,
And in the stillness hark! the chirping calls
Of insects in the grass. Endymion lies
Deeming the whole a dream; his fixèd stare
Brings her to consciousness, she starts, to fly
Into the forest shade, and leaves him there
In half-waked wonder gazing at the sky.

CLYTIE

I SEE sweet Clytie, as the east grows gray,
Her smooth bright petals lingeringly unfold,
Till from her swelling breast they curve away;
The lucent dewdrops, slipping from their hold,
Roll down the moving petals to the stem.

The dark hills chiselled in the crystal air
Are touched with light as with a diadem;
Serene the archèd zenith, blue and fair.
And gliding low across the glimmering skies
A black bird passes with a ragged wing.

Ah, mortal still the yearning of those eyes
That Clytie lifts, her pale lips murmuring,
“Perchance to-day may be the happy one.”

A holy majesty is on her brow:
No weakling she that dares to love the sun.

The birds are twittering on every bough,
The steaming earth with incense wreaths is twined,
The cry goes forth, “Hail! Hail! Apollo, hail!”
Before his pathway, lo, the herald wind

Scatters the vapors, piled in masses pale.
As silvern trumpets onto stillness blare,
So bursts his glory on the shattered night.
"Here!" and she lifts her eyes to meet the glare—
The hopeless hope upspringing makes them bright.
White in enfolding glory gleams his form,
Each supple curve distinct through misty flame;
His mantle, purple as a gathering storm,
Flaunts backward, and the steeds none else can tame
His outstretched arm with easy power guides.
Immortal loveliness blooms on that face,
The pride of conscious beauty there abides.
Stirring his shining curls with idle grace
He bends his neck; she sees, her hopes arise:
The god's incurious glances sweep the ground,
Unnoticed utterly the pleading eyes,
Which floating dots and crimson mists surround
Till dazzled darkness seems a grateful boon.
Anon the earth is warm, a velvet pair
Of tiny violet moths that love the noon,
Grown bold and joyous in the windless air,
Dodge, fluttering, in many a mazy loop.
As twilight comes I see her once again:
The comely head falls slantingly adroop,
The parted lips are lax with weary pain.
All day his present beauty was her pride,

Tireless she turned unto him hour by hour,
Beheld naught fair in all the world beside,
 Unmarked the wooing bee, the nodding flower.

Her petals are a bud before in heaven

The gleaming moon her course has scarce begun;
The soul whose worship was supremely given
 Can love no less thing, having loved the sun.

PYGMALION AND GALATEA

THE golden lamps, upflaring as they swing,
 Set floating purple shadows all achase,
And strike on porphyry pillars, glimmering,
 A thread of light from capital to base.
Behind the fragrant incense clouds that rise
 In thin blue streams to hang in wreaths above
She stands, a pale perfection, and his eyes
 Fill with slow tears of wonder and of love.
Kneeling he notes the undulating sweep
 From heel to shoulder, such an harmony
Of soft procedure as descending sleep;
 The slender arms in fallen laxity
With claspèd hands, the dim reflected light;
 Below the lifted chin, the quiet mouth
Tender as if she mused on lost delight,
 And sweet as half-blown blossoms of the South.
But at the stilly whiteness of her eyes
 His heart seems piercèd with a swift-struck knife.

“O golden Queen of Love,” Pygmalion cries,
“Perfect this beauty with the gift of life!”
Through the high corridor the echo wakes
To die away in clamorous dull turmoil.
Laying upon her foot a hand that shakes,
He shrinks from chilling stone with quick recoil;
The smoke’s tall column shivers at his breath
That breaks from wide disparted lips, and now
About the statue’s form of marble death
A tinge of living radiance flushes slow.
As when along the dappled silver clouds,
When early morning winds are piping cold,
The tiny flecks of glistering fire in crowds
Run on their edge to spreading lines of gold,
Thus on the heavy whiteness of her hair
A shimmering stream of ribbèd flame is shed,
And soft small curls, upstarting, flutter there,
The crispèd gleams grow misty round her head.
Now lower sweeps the life; descending warm,
He sees red bloom across her pale cheeks flow,
Then hides his face asudden on his arm.
Behold, within her eyes the soul-lights glow!
Arise, Pygmalion, arise, arise,
And look upon the wonder of her face,
And look upon the glory of her eyes;
Lo, how she lifts her arms with wavering grace,

And fingers curved, she bends, her long curls sway,
Parting in happy smiles the bright lips move;
Fitly the gods thy faithful toil repay—
The Beauty thou hast worshipped is thy Love!

PSYCHE AND EROS

Lo, she that all her childhood's dreamy days
 Apart hath wandered from the laughing band,
And through the warm and grassy meadow ways
 Let fall her flowers, musing, from her hand,—
This Psyche, whom the earth may scarcely hold,
 So near she standeth unto things divine,
Now gently parts the curtain's swaying fold,
 Saying, “Here hides that unseen joy of mine.”
Swiftly within she steps with lamp held high,
 And musky perfume, and the silver note
Of wandering flutes that seem to breathe and sigh
 Along the warmed air, about her float:
Unceasing iteration of one strain,
 Familiar seeming and as melting sweet
As, in the coolness after summer rain,
 The song the thrushes o'er and o'er repeat
When verdant woods with brooks are clamorous,
 And leaves adrip with sparkles and with light.
Far past the dreams of Psyche amorous,

The loveliness that dazzles on her sight.
The room is hung with draperies aglow
 Of heavy crimson and ensanguined dyes,
And on the golden couch, a rift of snow,
 The slim young god in soothèd slumber lies.
Fresh as white violets of early Spring,
 Smooth-skinned as rounded wands of ivory,
Amid the billowed purple glimmering
 His gracious limbs sink in soft symmetry.
His head adroop upon his shoulder bare,
 His rosy lips unclosed with fluttering breath,
Streams o'er his arm the shining strands of hair;
 Lo, scattered on the floor his fallen wreath
In fading fragrance, all of roses wan
 With tinted blush along each petal's tips,
And flushing at the heart the color ran
 Where he had laid the blossom to his lips.
Smit with strange numbness like to trancèd swoon,
 Poor Psyche's leaping heart alone may move;
In her chill hand the lamp is quivering soon,
 A gleaming drop falls on the drowsy Love.
Stung with the burn, he starts through all his frame,
 Yet Psyche fears not, for his jewel eyes
Are fixed on her alit like lucid flame.
 She sees his purple-plumèd pinions rise;
He poises, every feathered tuft astir;

Slowly he sails aloft, she makes no sign,
For all he doth is surely best for her,
Since all he doth is surely all divine.
Alone she stands in darkness and in cold,
But knows, in triumphing above her pain,
Who loveth thus, not here such love may hold;
God, 'mid the gods, shall find that love again.

BELLEROPHON

'TWAS in the mystic light of waning day,
When all the air is sweet; beside the pool
Of crystal Hippocrene I dreaming lay,
With idle fingers in the waters cool.
My heart was swollen with unuttered song,
The beauty of the earth was strangely new.
There rose a sound like winds awakening strong,
And, lo, the wingèd horse above me flew.
Close crouched I lay and watched his slow descent
On sailing plumes, white as a silver cloud;
And when beside the spring his head he bent
And sucked the sparkling stream, his nostrils
proud
Dilated, lo, I leapt upon him there!
Wild, wild he reared, and then with sudden bound
Sprang from the earth, and, darting up the air,
Dove, dashed, and turned in many a dazèd round.
I clung within his foam-white, heavy mane,
And saw beneath the golden sunset sky

A lake of rippled flame. He soared again:
The dwindling earth sunk fast, the clouds drew
nigh;
The rosy lustre down the unmeasured deeps
Of heaven glimmering below us lay,
And higher, higher up the darkening steeps
Of ether, fast we bore our fearful way.
The air was cold and thin; I closed mine eyes,
And clung the closer, till a far, sweet note
Aroused me, and behold, the sombre skies
Through which we seemed to undulate and float
Were glorious with stars, that large and bright
Shone in the quiet air, near and more near,
And in the pulsing of their silver light
A music swelled and sunk most piercing clear,
Sweetness intolerable, and the strains
Commingled into intertwining song
As sunlight tangles in the summer rains.
And as it rose resplendent, pealing strong,
The climbing harmonies intenser rang.
Embathed in glory and the flaming crash
Of light and music, lo, I rose, I sang,
Tossed up my arms—and with a blinding flash
I fell, I fell, down, down, forever down,
Whirled like a withered leaf that sinks amain
Through windless air from some tall oak-tree's crown,

Till gathering dimness clouded o'er my brain.

* * * * *

And now in faltering syllables ye hear

The ceaseless cho of that heavenly strain;

And though for this a broken frame I bear,

Well worth the pain—well worth, well worth the
pain.

PROSERPINA: A SONG OF THE SPRING

Now along the woods a sheen
Shows the coming of the green;
Across the distant hills the mist
Purple floats as amethyst.
The birds dart forth in wheeling flight,
Clearly singing their delight,
And the soft breath of the air
Scatters perfume everywhere:
Scents of leaves and scents of shoots
Wanly yellow; scents of roots
Stirring in the moistened ground.
Now there wakes the cheery sound
Of the crystal running rills,
Tinkling, bubbling, down the hills.
And, by verdure heralded,
Starting through the stubble dead,
Lo, she comes that daintiest is
From out the ice-bound realms of Dis;
Wreathed with honey-smelling vine,

Forth again comes Proserpine.
Her filmy mantle green, as pale
As the new leaves drooping frail,
Floating while she swiftly passes,
Shakes the dew from frosty grasses,
And blows about her form of grace;
The blanched hues of her fair face
Flushing rosy in the breeze
That, stirring in the tips of trees,
Tosses out to threads of light
All her curlèd tresses bright.
Dainty Korè, smooth and sweet,
Flowers rise about thy feet;
Thrust up gleaming from the mold
See the crocus cups of gold,
And the tiny starry things
Dropping petals like white wings.
Blithe her tripping footfall seems,
But her eyes are deep with dreams;
From the Shade Land must she bring
Pensive visions lingering.
Yet a promise of new birth
Speaks the sacred life of earth;
In the budding of the trees
Nature gives us prophecies:
Comfort of returning breath

From the numbing hold of death,
Peaceful wakening after pain,
Youth that shall return again
Gay in strength and fresh as flowers
Under clearer skies than ours.
Then, as morning breaks to cheer
With warmth and light the new-born year,
Love shall wake us like the sun
And life's Easter be begun.

THE LOVE TEST

Time, a truce during the Trojan War.

Scene, a grove on the bank of a river just outside Troy.

Persons: ALCANDER, a Trojan General.

PYRRHA, a noble lady of Troy.

THE GOD APOLLO, disguised as a shepherd-boy.

Enter ALCANDER.

Al. I know 'tis long before the appointed time,
But yet the torment lest I might be late,
And so, might miss her, drove me here so soon.
In this same spot ten long, long days ago,
We plighted mutual love—O, blessed spot!
And when I clasped upon her rounded arm
A golden bracelet deftly cut within,
With tiny arrows crossed, I, laughing, said,
“I’d pray, let this be secret, but I know
No girl can keep a secret,” and she cried,
“I am as strong in silence as in love;
Try both as one, you will not see me fail.”
I made this test then of her strength of love,
That she tell no one of our plighted troth,
Nor whence the jewel came, and, beyond all,

That she should never show its hid device;
That she should meet me here to-day to tell
If she had kept her faith. Hark! doth she come?

Enter the Shepherd-boy.

Shep. Renownèd valor, pray you pardon me,
Forgive my boldness; a poor shepherd-lad,
Tending my flocks near by, I saw you here,
And longed to see you nearer, hear you speak.

Al. There's no offence, my pretty boy; come here.

[Shepherd *approaches and gazes at him in admiration; finally he lays his hand on ALCANDER's sword.*

Shep. This is the sword that pierced like lightning-stroke

That close-grown forest of the serried Greeks.

Al. (smiling). Thou canst not lift it, little one. See, thus!

[*Makes passes with the sword. Seats himself on a fallen tree and motions the boy to sit at his feet.*

With such a face as thine, my pretty boy,
Thou shouldst be loved of women; tell me now
What dainty maid is chosen for your love.

Shep. No one. I am a poet, noble sir.
And do you think that in the sun-bright blaze
Of poetry the stars of earth's desires

Are visible, when e'en the silver moon
Of earthly love is lustreless and pale?
But yet at times, and thus to-day it chanced,
A lovely face will fire my heated brain
With transient frenzy, for I know all moods,
And love to watch the earthly passions stir,
Since they are noblest subjects for my song.
Dost thou know what is poetry, good sir?
A mighty ocean, in whose gleaming deep
Ten thousand, thousand rivulets of joy
From all the myriad beauties of the earth
Pour in incessant, clear, and sparkling floods,
And there love's azure rivers ceaseless sink.

Al. I do not understand you; do you mean
A poet has more joy than other men,
And more of beauty? All thou seest, I see.

Shep. Look where the river, catching on the
stones,
Rends her blue raiment into silver shreds.

Al. I see a ripple in the water. Well?

Shep. You see not half earth's beauties; but 'tis
vain

To tell you of them. If it is your wish,
I'll sing to you.

Al. I pray you do, good boy.

Shep. (sings). Live thou for love, live thou for love,
I live for song!

Thy love is mortal, she will die
Ere long, ere long;
But song is immortality.
Live thou for love, I live for song!

Live thou for love, live thou for love,
I live for song,
For eyes grow dim with bitter tears,
With age and wrong;
But music's power defies the years.
Live thou for love, I live for song!

Al. Why dost thou say, "Live *thou* for love,"
young boy?

Hast thou not heard Alcander called "the proud,
That scorns all women"?

Shep. I have heard it, sir.

Al. Why dost thou smile and turn away thy head?

Shep. Truly, good sir, because I know her name.

Al. You could not!

Shep. Ah, there is one surely, then?

Al. Jest not with me, young man.

Shep. Your pardon, sir.

Her name is Pyrrha.

Al. Now by all the gods!

How couldst thou know this? 'Tis incredible!

Shep. Cheat not yourself, good sir; she's false to
you.

Al. She false? I'll not believe it! Wretched boy,
You marked us by this tree ten days ago,
Divined the rest? Speak, speak! Jove blast thee,
speak!

Say it was thus and I will pardon thee.—
Still silent? False? Thou cur, she is not false!

Shep. Ah, sir, what have I said! O, pardon me!

Al. Tell all thou knowest or I kill thee now.

Shep. Well, since you do command me, sir, 'twas
thus:

In the long golden light of afternoon
But yesterday I wandered through the fields,
To seek this lady, and in anger, too,
For they had said she meant to turn me off
From her employ for dreaming overmuch.
And as I passed I gathered from the grass
The sweet wild violets and wove a wreath;
When, lo, upon the borders of the wood,
Her white robe clear against the shadow green,
A fresh breeze whirling into twinkling light
The tender leaves, and shredding out her curls
Into a mist of gold, the lady stood.
I looked upon her face, and she on mine,
And as we gazed, our mutual anger met
Soft, as when cloud meets cloud.
I sang to her; she told me of your love,

Unclasped the jewelled circlet on her arm,
And showed within the little arrows crossed.
Why, I do know the sweetest place to kiss,
Where, at the corner of her rosy mouth,
There comes a tiny dimpling upper curve.

Al (stabbing him). This, to the cursèd sweetness of
thy throat!

Shep. Ah, thou hast hurt me, miserable man!
See, where my blood is fallen to the ground
The flowers breathe forth perfumes strangely sweet;
That tiny songless bird it stained so red,
Become a lark, soars to the glowing sun,
Mad with the new-born power of melody. [Exit.]

Enter PYRRHA.

Pyr. Alcander, O Alcander!

Al. Call again; call till thy tongue falls out from
weariness.

I'll never dance to that sweet pipe again.

Pyr. Ah, here you are! Could you not answer
me?

I've come to prove to you a woman's faith;
I've barred so fast the red gates of my lips
No wingèd thought escaped. Unlock them now.

Al. Be still.

Pyr. Alcander!

Al. Peace! I'll hear no word.

Not only the most base unfaithfulness,
Breaking the promise which you said you held
Like thrice-tried steel, as if it were a hair—
Not only this, but, ah, contemptible,
You dare to face me here with words of “faith,”
Aye, and of “love.” No, no, I will not hear!

Pyr. Alcander! this is false! Alcander!

Al. Peace!

[She looks at him an instant in silence and then slowly retires.]

If she were innocent? O foolish heart,
Hast thou not proof? But ah, that noble face!

[Exit ALCANDER.]

Enter the Shepherd, opposite.

Shep. My lady! O, my lady! turn, I pray!

Pyr. Who are you, boy? Why call you after me?

Shep. Something of greatest interest to unfold.

Pyr. That is impossible. What wouldest thou say?
Be brief. Is’t money you desire?

Shep. Ah, no. I am the man that told this deadly
lie.

I told Alcander that you loved him not. That you
were false.

What, hast no angry word?

Pyr. I am not angry; what is that to me?
I know not what base reason thou couldst have
For such a falsehood. Evil is the world;

There might be many reasons, that is naught;
I care alone that he believed thy word.

Shep. My reason you could never understand,
But with a woman's quickness you have struck
The very root of all, " that he believed " ;
In spite of any proof, " that he believed."
By this he is unworthy of your love,
You cast him forth forever, wretched, base—

Pyr. Be silent; you do show you know not love.
Although he doubts me, yet I love him still.

[*The Shepherd kneels and kisses her hand.*

Enter ALCANDER.

Al. Pyrrha! I half believed thee until now;
A secret hope still whispered at my heart,
" She may be true." Well, what hast thou to say?
What canst thou say?

Pyr. I can but speak the truth.
I never saw this man before this hour.

Al. So apt? O, shame! (*To Shepherd.*) But you
at least lied not.

Then draw!

Shep. I do not wish to fight.

Al. You shall. [*He grapples with him.*

Shep. Hold off thy hands! I would not hurt thee,
man!

Al. Thou wouldst not hurt me, strong one! Many
thanks!

Now show thy lady how I branded thee
A wretched coward, scarce an hour ago.
Ah, it is hidden well; pull down thy robe.

Shep. I would not frighten thee, thou foolish one,
I pray thee do not force me show my wound.

Al. Think not to play the hero, coward boy;
Show where I struck thee, or I'll force thee to!

[*The Shepherd drops his robe from his shoulder
and shows his neck unwounded.*]

Al. Well, if thou be a fiend I fear thee not!

Pyr. (catching his arm). Alcander, do not anger him.

Al. Stand back;
And if I live or die, what is't to you?

(To Shepherd.) If steel is vain against thee, I'll try flesh.

[*Shepherd springs at his throat and wrestles with him. It
darkens. The Shepherd flings off ALCANDER
and shines forth APOLLO. Dazzling light falls
from him.*]

Al., Pyr. (both kneeling). Apollo!

[*He smiles upon them. A cloud covers him; then
rolls away.*]

Al. Ah, he saw, invisible,
Our plighted troth; 'twas thus I was deceived.
Canst thou forgive my base distrust of thee?

Pyr. True love is all too ready to forgive.
Unasked, he pardons; winged with rainbow joy,
He flies before the steps of tardy speech.

THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH

IN the grasses the cobwebs were lying,
Frosted white with the fall of the dew,
When we roused from our tents before sunrise
As the bugles the rippling call blew.
“Drop your knapsacks, men! Form!” and now,
“Forward!”

We are off, and the red dust upflies,
Not a breath turns the silver-lined birch-leaves,
And the quivering air dazzles our eyes.
Comes a sound—was that thunder that rumbled?
In the vivid sky blazes the sun.
‘Twas the cannon that roared in the distance.
Hasten on, for the fight has begun!
As we paused by a church for our orders
Stood our Chief, as I see him e’en now,
With his hand on his horse’s hot forehead,
And the dust on his noble white brow.
Then a farmer rushed up to us, panting:
“Sir, your soldiers are flying ahead!”

“Silence! This is some coward’s invention.
March forward, men!” Washington said.
Then we stirred at the cry of the bugles,
At the sound of the trampling of feet,
And we felt that to struggle was holy,
And to die for our country was sweet.
Then the blood hammered fast in our temples,
And we burned with the thirst for the fray,
And our muscles strained hard at our muskets
As our General spurred, plunging, away.
Look, who comes? See the troops there before us!
’Tis our soldiers, and flying, we see.
Wild, disordered, and jaded, they meet us,
They retreat—by the orders of Lee!
On we go with haste of dread urging
To a farm where the broad brook runs fast,
And the children at play by the lilacs
Come out running to see us march past;
And the sweet, thrilling sound of their voices
Floats across on the flower-scented air,
“O, they’re marching right down to the willows,
And they’ll ruin our playhouse that’s there!”
O, you children! our hearts ached to hear you,
Though we knew not that there by your wall
They will dig a deep trench on the morrow
For the men that ere evening shall fall.

Now we looked on the country below us,
Where our soldiers left honor behind,
And were flying like leaves in the Autumn
When they whirl in the eddying wind.

At their head, lo, the recreant commander,
And our Chief urged his horse's quick pace,
And there, on the bridge o'er the torrent,
Lee and Washington met face to face.

Such a glance as when Jove shakes Olympus,
As he scatters the thunderbolts wide;
Like the flash of a sword from its scabbard
Came his speech: "Sir, what means this?" he cried.

Then the orders came rattling like hailstones,
And the panic was stayed by his hand.

Fast the batteries form in the forest;
On the heights with the cannon we stand.

From beneath the low boughs of the orchard,
Like the angry wasps, Wayne's bullets fly,
Till the fierce Colonel Monckton grows reckless:
"Drive them out! Drive them out!" is the cry.

On the grenadiers charge with their bayonets,
Ranks of steel like a glittering wall;
With a crash like the meeting of waters
Comes the answering fire—and they fall.

But the heat of the air saps our courage,
And we faint 'neath the glare of the sky;

To the streaked brook our comrades crawl, moaning
Like the hurt deer, to drink and to die.
Yet He called for a charge, the undaunted,
And we formed in our battle array,
But the shadows arose from the hollows,
So we waited the coming of day.

When we looked for our foes on the morrow,
As the mist melted off in the sun,
Like the fabled Assyrian army
They had vanished—and Monmouth was won!

WHAT ONE WOMAN DID FOR THE BATTLE OF LEXINGTON

'Tis night, and after the toilsome day
She dreams in peace with her worries fled
Of her sailor husband so far away
And the two dear boys in the room o'erhead.
There's a clatter of hoofs and a cry without,
And she starts and wakens in vague alarms,
Confused and wondering, hears the shout:
"The British are coming! To arms! To arms!"

She springs to the windows and gazing sees
A horseman speeding, and, lo! a light
Flashes forth between the trees
From the farm beyond, and she shakes with fright;
And the understanding of what has passed
Dawns on her mind with oppression slow,
Till she cries, with a sudden pang at last:
"My boys! My boys! O, they must not go!"

“Why, they are but children and they will fear”—

As if in answer there comes the call:

“O, mother, the fowling-piece is here,

But the shot! the shot! It is all too small.”

She is brave in an instant: “The spoons, my boy;

We will cut them up to the proper size.”

As she speaks in rushes her pride and joy,

Her youngest darling, with tear-brimmed eyes.

And she thinks, “At least I shall keep this one,

For the child is afraid”—but his words outbreak—

“Oh, John has taken the only gun,

And what is there left for me to take?”

Then her great soul soars to the sacrifice,

And she kisses her boy, and without a word,

She takes from the chimney and on him ties

His Puritan grandsire’s rusty sword.

So she sends them forth and through all the day,

As she hears the booming of distant guns,

She stands at the window to watch and pray,

“God save my country and save my sons!”

And ever in season of fear or ill,

When cheeks grow pale and when brave hearts
quake,

May the daughters of freedom be ready still

To give their best for their country’s sake.

COLUMBUS

WE mark a tiny ship with canvas furled
Tossed by the steady gallop of the sea,
And high upon the heaving prow he stands,
Shut round within the circle of a fog;
With moisture beaded on his dripping locks,
He breathes the heavy dampness of the air.
The shuddering vessel cleaves the roaring tide,
About him swing the waves, all shining black
With curling crests that shatter into foam.
Not now the apathy of blank despair
He feels, not now the courage born of strife;
Rent with the sickening war of hope and fear,
He sees behind him lie the conquered past—
The toil, the strain, the anguish, the delay;
The terror at the wonderful events
When the eternal laws of nature failed,
Their guide, the unerring compass, proving false;
The mutiny, the thousand skilful tricks

By which he kept the courage of the men.
He bore it all; but this is worst of all,
This vacillating pendulum of thought.
He dares not trust his hope, a cobweb bridge
Spun from his own desires—it would not hold.
He hears the crack of footsteps, and he turns
To see young Pedro in the uncertain light
Advancing slow across the slippery deck.
The fog has put a halo round the lamp
Swung from the masthead, and the rising wind
Strikes keenly in his eyes and drives the fog
In clouds across the sea, till on before
Looms up the black bulk of the “Pinta’s” stern.
Is it the fancy of his longing eyes,
So strained and fixed by gazing ever on,
Or is it—can it be—indeed a light?
Does it not vanish? Lo, it moves, it moves!
“I dare not yet believe; I will not hope.
Let me not thus arise to fall again!
Pedro, my boy, look, look! Thou seest naught?
There’s nothing there?—there?—there?” His tremb-
ling hand
Points to the dim horizon, and the boy
Leans forward with knit brows and starting eyes.
An instant’s pause, and then—“I see a light!”
“A light? O Pedro, is thy vision sure?

O God! O God! Hark! hark! I hear a cry!"
" 'Tis from the 'Pinta.'" "Listen!" On the wind
Comes, faint but clear, the shouting: "Land! land!
land!"

THE BALLAD OF THE GENERAL'S KISS

THEY scarcely marked, that busy morn,
If Margery were there,
Her mother had not even time
To plait her shining hair;
And awed amid the glittering throng
That filled her father's hall,
She shrank behind one gentleman,
The tallest of them all.
She knew not that the shielding form
Where covert she had won,
Until they bowed before him there,
Was General Washington.
Unnoted by the passing crowd
In rustling silks arrayed,
Close to the Hero she adored
Still stood the little maid.
But now the garden must be viewed,
Her father's special pride,
And turning, lo, the General asks

If she will be his guide!
She curtsies low, she dares not speak,
Nor once she lifts her eyes,
Though soon within his offered palm -
Her little left hand lies.

They pass from out the close, cold house,
Thy breathe the sparkling air,
And warm and bright the sunlight falls
Across her golden hair.

She threads the straight box-bordered paths,
The General at her side;
He checks, to match her fluttering steps,
His long and stately stride.

Her fingers in his folded clasp
Are trembling all the while,
Until across his solemn face
Breaks, swift and sweet, a smile.

She smiles an answer ere she thinks,
And at his quiet words
And questionings her fears take flight
Like sudden startled birds.

Frankly she gazes in his face:
Calm is the splendid brow,
Those close-held lips, of power controlled,
Are curved in pleasure now.

Those eyes, that looked on scorn and fear

And death 'mid horrors wild,
Beam down in simple kindness
Upon a happy child.
They pause beneath the apple-tree,
Where, boughs on boughs o'erhead,
Pale blossoms breathe forth perfumes faint
'Mid folded buds of red;
And as the breeze puffs lightly by,
The showers of petals white
Sail down and on his shoulders broad
And on his head alight.
She tells him how she climbs this tree,
High up, nor fears to slip,
And father says that 'tis her own,
She plays it is a ship.
He listens gravely courteous,
She chatters unafraid,
Then, bending from his stately height,
Kisses the little maid.
And now, as they their steps retrace,
Her prattling seems to fail;
So, stooping to her, in his turn
The General tells a tale.
Her shy bright eyes are on his face,
Her crimson lips apart,
And, ah, beneath the silken frock,

How beats the little heart!
The sunlight slants across the grass,
The air is growing cold,
And the stiff, shiny leaves of box
Seem coated o'er with gold.
On trellises the budding grape
Its scented tendrils twines,
And brilliant in the amber sky
The evening planet shines.

When gathered round the snapping fire,
Full oft in later days,
The folk with tear-brimmed eyes of love
Joined in their Hero's praise,
She added many an eager word,
But, garnering her bliss,
Hid in the silence of her heart
The memory of his kiss.

WASHINGTON AT TRENTON

THE dazzling sun drops down and out of sight;
Clouds, bowled from the horizon, toss on high;
Across the ice a glancing pallid light
Flows from the lucid amber of the sky.
Hark to the booming of the Delaware!
The rising wind lashes the branches frore.
And now a steadier sound breaks on the air—
Trampling of troops that gather on the shore.
Black falls the sudden dark, time presses—haste!
This desperate chance to seize a distant foe
Demands all speed. Across the ice-clogged waste
Of churning waters still the boats move slow.
Firm stands the intrepid Chief in patient strength;
Knox shouts above the roaring of the tide.
In waning night the stream is passed at length,
They form in columns on the further side.
The storm drives slantingly the sleet; down-shed
From swaying pines slip weights of slush below;
The soaked and ragged soldiers, buffeted,

Leave tracks of blood along the drifted snow.
'Tis Christmas night, when children dance about

The glistening tree with all its joys beneath.
Say, do these fathers hear that first glad shout?

Lo, two have fallen now in frozen death,
What wonder they are sick at heart and throw
Their wet and useless muskets fiercely by!
In every anguished breast new terrors grow

As gray dawn glimmers in the cloud-hung sky.
But Washington: "They cannot fight, you say?
The powder's wet, they fling their muskets down?
Then give them bayonets; we fight to-day.

Advance and charge! For we must take the town."
He dominates the pain, the numb despair;
The shivering fear retreats, a thing apart
From patriot warfare, and to each man there

Goes forth the courage of his own great heart.
They part to right and left. Round each black house
The moving columns creep. "Now, give the word!"
The Hessians, wakened from their long carouse,

Rise dazed to see the flashing of the sword.
Frantic the cries: "Turn out! Turn out! The foe!"

The drums are rattling, trumpets crash the alarm.
The outposts fly and wildly fire below
From upper windows of each captured farm.
Swiftly they train their cannon in the street;

But ere the fire breaks forth to check and slay,
Two heroes charge upon them bold and fleet,
Stop not for wounds, and drag the guns away.
And he that planned is he that rules the strife—
Great Washington still in the vanguard rides,
Unhearing those that beg him guard his life,
Like towering flame his warrior ardor guides.
Brave Rahl has fallen, the Hessian flag droops low.
The Chief whose genius led this wondrous way
Speaks now his single thought with face aglow:
“O, for our country what a glorious day!”

CROMWELL
AN HISTORICAL PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS

PERSONS REPRESENTED

OLIVER CROMWELL, Lieutenant-General of the Parliamentary Army, General, and then Lord Protector of England.

CHARLES THE FIRST, King of England.

JOHN MILTON, Poet, afterwards Secretary of the Commonwealth.

SIR THOMAS FAIRFAX, General of the Parliamentary Army.

GENERAL LAMBERT,

LIEUTENANT GEORGE MONK,

COLONEL EDWARD WHALLEY, cousin of Cromwell,

GENERAL HENRY IRETON, afterwards son-in-law of Cromwell,

GENERAL HARRISON,

CHARLES DOYLEY, friend of Fairfax,

THE LITTLE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, son of King Charles.

GERALD LEROY, a boy singer, in attendance on King Charles.

PRINCE RUPERT, cousin of King Charles,

SIR JACOB ASTLEY,

SIR MARMADUKE LANGDALE,

LORD GEORGE DIGBY, Earl of Bristol,

THOMAS WROTHSLEY, Earl of Southampton,

WILLIAM SEYMOUR, Marquis of Hertford,

JAMES BUTLER, Duke of Ormond,

Lords Lauderdale, Lanark, Herbert, and other nobles in attendance on King Charles.

JOHN ASHBURNHAM,

SIR JOHN BERKELEY,

WILL LEGG,

ROBERT HAMMOND, Governor of the Isle of Wight.

JOHN BRADSHAW, Lord President of the Court.

SIR HARRY VANE the Younger,

HENRY MARTEN,

THE EARL OF DENBIGH and two other Commissioners from Parliament.

JOHN CROMWELL, cousin of Cromwell.

Officers in the Parliamentary Army.

Officers in the King's Army.

Nobles in attendance on King Charles.

Servants of the King.

Members of Parliament.

HENRY CROMWELL, son of Cromwell.
CAPTAINS WILTSE, COCKAINE, and BENSON of the King's Army.
RUCE, a scout in the King's Army.
HOLD-FAST-THAT-WHICH-IS-GOOD JAMES, Captain in the Parliamentary Army.
ELIZABETH CLAYPOLE, daughter of Cromwell.
FRANCES CROMWELL, his youngest daughter.
A Little Girl, his grandchild.
MISTRESS CROMWELL, his mother.
THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH, daughter of King Charles.
LADY FAIRFAX, wife of Sir Thomas Fairfax.
MARY WILTSE, daughter of Captain Wiltse.
A Scotchman, an old soldier in the Parliamentary Army, and his wife.
Soldiers of the Parliamentary and of the King's armies, Clerks of Court, Attendants, etc.

L. of C.

ACT I. THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

June 14, 1645.

ACT II. THE KING, THE ARMY, AND THE PARLIAMENT

June 5 to November 12, 1647.

SCENE I. The camp at Saffron Walden. The story of the seizure of the King.

SCENE II. Plot and counter-plot at Hampton Court.

SCENE III. The "Blue Boar" Inn.

SCENE IV. A House of Lord Southampton in Titchfield. The flight of the King.

ACT III. THE DEATH OF KING CHARLES

January 19 to 31, 1649.

SCENE I. At Whitehall before the trial.

SCENE II. The last day of the trial.

SCENE III. The execution.

SCENE IV. Over the King's coffin. The parting of Charles and Cromwell.

ACT IV. THE BATTLE OF DUNBAR

September 2 and 3, 1651.

SCENE I. The gardens of Brocksmouth House on the afternoon before the battle. The discovery of Cromwell.

SCENE II. Around the camp-fire the following night.

SCENE III. The charge of Cromwell.

SCENE IV. The struggle at the Brock.

SCENE V. The fight on the slope of the hill.

SCENE VI. In the ravine at sunrise. The story of the charge.

SCENE VII. The Psalm of Victory.

ACT V. OLIVER, PROTECTOR

September, 1652, to December 16, 1653.

SCENE I. The cost of Milton's "Defence of the People of England."

SCENE II. The dissolution of the Long Parliament.

SCENE III. Cromwell outlines his policy.

SCENE IV. The ceremony of installation. The prophecy of Milton.

CROMWELL

ACT I

SCENE I. *The Royalist camp on Dust Hill, overlooking the marsh. The town of Naseby in the distance.* PRINCE RUPERT, SIR MARMADUKE LANGDALE, LORD DIGBY, ASTLEY, and GERALD LEROY, R. Captains COCKAINE, SIR JOHN WILTSE, and BENSON *stretched on the ground, L. Other soldiers walking and drinking.*

P. Rup. Good sirs, why stand we here thus motionless?

When I arose the moon's broad golden shield
Hung in the brightening sky—three hours ago!
Langdale will off, with all his northern horse
That grow so homesick. Undiverted minds
Are prone to sentiment.

Lang. 'Twere better, sir,
That they should occupy their minds with quoits,
As your men did that Ireton seized last night?

P. Rup. You mean an insult to my forces, sir!

Lord Digby. O, peace, my lords! Let there no likeness be

Between us and our foes. I hear their ranks
Are rent with factions and with jealousies.

P. Rup. Sooner than have a similarity
Between us and those tapsters, clowns, and knaves
In any way (your hand, good Langdale, so!)—
I would love Goring—more I cannot say.
O, spare thy black looks, Digby; well I know
That he's thy friend, but he's no friend to me.—
But where is Fairfax?

Lord Digby. 'Tis my thought he hides.
Men say he is discouraged; that his force
Goes stammering round the country like his tongue.

Astley. What caused the sudden move to Kisling-
bury?

'Twas Ironside had come and stirred them all.
Prince Rupert, there's the soldier we must fear.

Lord Digby. Their model army was produced by
him,
And now they pass their days in whining psalms,
If one should swear he pays twelve pence—

P. Rup. Ye gods!
My pockets would be empty oversoon,
And all our army bankrupt! 'Twould bring on

New raids, or strange and sudden temperance.

Leroy. My lord, who is this Ironside?

P. Rup. Cromwell, boy.

He shows he hath but lately joined the ranks

Who knows not Cromwell under any name!

Astley. A farmer, who reverses the old verse
And bends his pruning-hook into a sword.

P. Rup. Who, while we chatter here, is marching
fast!

Astley. Have patience, sir.

P. Rup. Have patience! Have I not?
Had I not had the patience of a bird
That droops within a cage, I were not here.

Astley. We hold the heights, and here had best
abide;
If Fairfax comes, he needs must mount this hill.

P. Rup. Gerald, my boy, summon a scout.

Leroy. Ho, Ruce!
Enter Ruce.

P. Rup. Ruce, go you forward. Be your eyes like
darts,
And shoot them through the trees to spy the foe.

Ruce. I will, my lord. [Exit.

P. Rup. Here, Gerald, sing to us.

Leroy. I soothe you, sir, with thoughts of others'
woe;

This is the plaint of a forsaken swain.

THE SONG OF THE FORSAKEN SHEPHERD.

Life is a weary load, not worth the bearing;
Beauty's a garment, quickly spoiled by wearing;
Love is a torch that quenches as it flashes;
Joy is a rose that withers into ashes.

Thus do I sing, since she, my love, disdained me:

She, my beauty, stained me,
She, my joy, but pained me,
She, my life, departed,
Left me broken-hearted.

P. Rup. Your shepherd is not broken-hearted,
child,

He cures his wound with ointment of sweet sound.

Leroy. Say rather that he feels his pain no more;
Lost in the joy of bursting melody,
As bodiless as echo in the woods
He gives you back the music that he hears.

P. Rup. You never knew such pain as that you
sing.

Leroy. No; for my lady doth return my love.

P. Rup. Thy lady! God ha'e mercy, forward boy!
Who is this lady?

Leroy. Wiltse's little girl.
And I do love her more than—

P. Rup. Aught beside.

Leroy. No; for my king comes first.

Astley. Well said, my boy.

Hold fast to that.

Leroy. Believe me, sir; I will.

Stood life and love and honor on one side
And on the other stood my sovereign lord,
I should not pause!

P. Rup. He doth deserve thy love.

Lord Digby. God save the King!

Wiltse. 'Fore Gad! One hour more and I take
root—a positive vegetable growth in this soil.

Benson. By the bones of the saints, Wiltse, if you
need more watering as a tree than you do as a man—

Wiltse. Out on you! I drank less than you last
night.

Benson. I'll make a compromise, and we'll join
forces; we both drank less than Cockaine here; Meg
said her arm was weary filling his glass.

Cock. A palpable lie, for I drank out of the bot-
tle!

Benson. Well, we'll not quarrel. This is a fine
country.

Cock. Ay, and Prince Rupert yonder's the prince
of commanders. No snivelling nonsense, by Heaven,
about the goods and rights of these farmers and
townsfolk. He knows the King's soldiers must live
on the fat of the land.

Benson. Do not the farmers lean on us?

Cock. Thou makest me ill. Pass the bottle. The King! The King!

Wiltse. Alas!

Benson. Traitor! Wouldst thou drink to any lass sooner than to the King?

Wiltse. 'Tis my bottle, and such a prologue is sure to be followed by a tragedy!

[He holds the bottle upside down.]

Benson. Here's mine.

[WILTSE raises it in silence and then drinks.]

Cock. Name your lady.

Wiltse. I will not.

Cock. He's afraid we'll steal her! Come, now, by the unfaithful Jupiter! I'm suited; and if I were not, there's a plenty to choose from.

Wiltse. Peace, Cockaine! Rather than hear you talk thus I will tell you. I drank, boys, to my motherless little girl, who may be fatherless, too, to-night, when, gadzooks, we may all be cold.

Cock. I'm cold now on this cursèd, damp earth; give me your hand to rise, Wiltse.

Benson. I'll make no excuses. Give me your hand, Wiltse, you're a good fellow.

Enter RUCE.

Ruce (to Prince Rupert). Your Highness, if the
enemy are here,

They are well hid; I cannot find them out.

The moor is bare and vacant.

P. Rup. Let us on!

His Majesty, as he himself hath said,
Must always pause to look before he leaps.
At Lubesham he changed and changed his mind—
Should we go back to Oxford to the Duke?
To Leicester, seeking Newark's infantry?
O Astley, thou art cooled with the frosts of age,
The mounting sap of Spring is in my blood.
On! Rupert comes to conquer or to die!

[*Cheer. Exit, followed by LEROY, COCKAINE, and others.*

Enter KING CHARLES with the MARQUIS OF HERTFORD and others.

K. Chas. All things look fair and smiling as this
day;

The fluttering leaves are lucent in the sun,
The great white clouds, like stately argosies,
Sweep slowly down the sapphire slope of heaven.
My heart was ne'er more hopeful.

Lord Digby. Sacred King,
Our foes had never courage; they possessed

A tinsel imitation of the steel,
Which now hath melted in the heat of fear.

Enter a Soldier.

Sol. Sirs, give me place! Your Majesty, they fly!
Prince Rupert sends you word the day is ours;
He sees the enemy in full retreat.
Lest they escape, he prays you join him soon.

K. Chas. My lords and gentlemen, your King is
here,
Your cause of quarrel and your Captain, too.
The foe is seen! Now with your swords proclaim
What courage and fidelity you bear.
May Heaven show forth its power by victory!
Come life or death, your King is by your side,
Forever in his memory to keep
The grateful record of your service here.
On, and cry “God and Mary!” [*Exeunt omnes.*]

Enter an old Soldier and his Wife, a Farmer, and a Scotchman.

Woman. Ay, there they ride; they be a gallant
sight,

Though they be of the wicked!

Old Sol. Stay we here.
O, why am I thus forced to watch, not act—
Forced into stillness like a worthless clod!

Farm. (to Woman). I come from Clipston; am a farmer near.

Your husband was a soldier?

Old Sol. Is, is, is!

A soldier once, a soldier all my life.

Woman. Poor soul, he lost his leg at Marston Moor,

Fighting for Parliament in Cromwell's band.

He'll talk to you if you but ask him well.

Old Sol. What think you of our country's prospects now?

His Majesty's "most sacred will" is law.

Farm. I know no logic, but it cannot be
That is divine which worketh naught but ill,
Taxing us past endurance by that right;
Then, when we force him to consider us,
He promises, upon his kingly word,
And then retracts and injures us the more.

Old Sol. True.

Scot. Verily, as saith the Holy Book,
As Pharaoh's heart was hardened, so is his.
He tried to force his mummeries on us—

Farm. Sir, have a care!

Scot.. We'll ha'e our kirk, not his!

Old Sol. I was in London, sirs, in forty-two,
Before the Parliament, upon that day

When he led armèd men into the House
To seize our members. Well, they were not there.
He called for them—he could not have them, though!

Scot. He broke his charter faith.

Farm. A tyrant's act!

Old Sol. We brought them up the river. O, 'twas
gay!

Skippon was in the Strand—a mighty throng.
We cried, "The King!" 'Twas he was wanting then!

Farm. I was a servant of the good Sir John.

Old Sol. John Eliot! That was a cruel deed!

Farm. Worse, worse! It was unjust. He had no
trial;

He pined and died unheard, the brave, good man!

[*Pause.*]

Old Sol. I know this stillness. 'Tis the catching
pause

Before the curling wave breaks into foam.

[*The noise of the battle is heard.*]

Hark! They have met. I hear the answering cries.
Wife, help me to the crest. Well done, well done!
We hold the heights. That fire from Sulby hedge
Will worry Rupert. No! They waver, they break!
By Heaven! That Rupert rides a devil's gait!

Scot. Good sir! You swear.

Old Sol. No, no; I speak the plain truth.

O, horror! They are breaking in the centre!
The day is lost!

Enter BENSON.

Farm. Here's one from the reserve; he'll bring us news.

Ben. Yes; they have Ireton there below the hill
A captive! Skippon's down! The centre's broke!
Their hell-begotten model army's gone!
Hurrah, good people! Health to Rupert, boys!

[*Throws them money.* *Exit.*

Old Sol. I fain must look again. No stronger power

Exists in man than curiosity,
O'ermastering even dread with clinging force.
Where's Rupert? Why, he's gone! Who holds our right,
That seems irresolute and does not move?

Farm. Whoe'er it is, he's got an evil place;
There's furze and rabbit-warrens on that ground.

Old. Sol. O, let me die that I should see this day!

Scot. Perchance our faith hath failed, as saith the Book!

Old Sol. 'Tis he! My God! 'tis Cromwell on the right!

His helmet's off! I know the way they ride!
O, cursèd day that I am idle here!

Farm. Langdale gives way!

Old Sol. O Cromwell! O my Captain!

He holds his forces back. He saves his strength.

Good, good! They leave their infantry exposed!

Ah, now he comes! There! there! No thunderbolt
Falls heavier! Hear the roar like bursting flame!

They come! they come! A solid wall of steel!

The King has turned! They yield! By Heaven! they
yield!

Enter several Royalists in retreat.

Roy. Fly! Fly!

Enter BENSON, wounded, supported by another.

1st Roy. O Benson! He was by the King.

2d Roy. How goes the day?

Ben. Lost! Lost!

Scot. The God of Joshua be praised!

2d Roy. The King?

Ben. Safe, but retreating!

1st Roy. Tell us all.

Ben. In the great crash he shouted unto us,
“One charge more, gentlemen, and all is ours!”
And would have charged, but Carnwath seized his
rein,

Cried, “Will you go to death?” God choke him
for’t!

And as he wavered some one cried, “March right!”

2d Roy. Ah, there rides Rupert. He has joined the King. [Exeunt BENSON and Royalists.

Woman. I cannot bear the sight! They scour the plain!

They strike them down like wheat beneath the scythe!

Scot. Be thou like Jael, of whom saith the Book, Blessed was she, the Kenite, Heber's wife!

Woman. O Heaven! They slash the women in the camp!

Scot. Well for the wicked queans!

Woman. O, horror, horror!

Farm. Good wife, come home with me; 'tis dangerous here. [Exeunt.

Enter COCKAINE and another Royalist, JAMES and two Puritans, fighting wildly with swords and the butt ends of their muskets.

Cock. Yield, Roundhead, yield!

James. Sayst thou so, son of Belial?

[He takes his musket by the barrel and strikes COCKAINE on the head.

Cock. Done! Then come with me, thou!

[He runs JAMES through with his sword.

God save the King!

What's thy name, man?

-James (faintly). Hold-fast-that-which-is-good—
[Dies.

Cock. They die a-psalming, by my soul! [Dies.

[*The other Royalist having fallen, the two Puritans come forward.*

1st Pur. This man is mine. Thou hadst the other one.

Why, he's not dead!

2d Pur. Stab him then.

1st Pur. Do thou.

2d Pur. I've half!

[*He stabs COCKAINE. They tear off his coat and jewels.*

1st Pur. Vain gewgaws! Let the Egyptians be despoiled!

2d Pur. Ay, verily. And now let's on for more!
[*Exeunt.*

Enter HARRISON, *with his sword drawn, and others.*

Har. Smite! slay! Spare not for woman or for child,

For Joshua drew not back from strife the hand
Wherewith he held outstretched his deadly sword,
Till utterly the wicked were destroyed—
Ten thousand men and women! Hah! A fiend!

[*He strikes at the air.*

Avaunt, thou arch-deceiver! Get thee hence!

Enter FAIRFAX, unhelmed, CHARLES DOYLEY, and others.

[*To FAIRFAX.*] A soldier boasts that he has won
the flag,

Which, sir, you took! Let me but silence him!

Fair. Nay. Let him take it, then: I need it not,
I have enough of honor. [*To DOYLEY.*] Charles,
come here.

I'll take your helmet now; this wind blows cold,
And I am heated. Where is Ireton gone?

Doy. 'Scaped from his captors when our fortunes
changed.

Enter WHALLEY.

Fair. (to WHALLEY). Ah, Whalley, you have done
your duty well!

Whal. Sir, I have done my duty. Could no less
And could no more. Langdale is beat to earth.

Fair. And Cromwell?

Doy. Lo, he comes!

1st Sol. The General comes!

2d Sol. Stand back!

3d Sol. He should be proud!

1st Sol. He saved us all!

Enter CROMWELL.

Crom. Give glory, all the glory unto God!
Whose arm alone hath smitten down the foe.
This is none other than the hand of God,
And it's our joy we are His instruments
Both for His glory and our country's good.
[To FAIRFAX.] Sir, have you sent dispatches?

Fair. No, not yet.
You will write Lenthall?

Crom. Yes; I fain would say
How honest men that should not be forgot
Have served their country well and faithfully.

Har. (aside to FAIRFAX). Shall I speak now?
Fair. (aside to HARRISON). No, no, not yet, not yet!
I dare not and thou must not tell him yet!
Here's Ireton.

Enter IRETON.

Why, you're wounded!

Ire. 'Tis not much.

Fair. (aside to IRETON). You know of Cromwell's—

Ire. (aside to FAIRFAX). Yes.

Fair. You love him well.

Then speak; we dare not.

Ire. (to FAIRFAX). I will do so, sir.

[To CROMWELL.] Since God hath given you this
public joy,

I pray you, bear with strength a private loss.

Crom. Not Oliver! Ireton, it's not my son!

Ire. General, it is.

Crom. Wounded! Not dead! Not dead!

Ire. Sir, I was by his side. His third horse fell;
He begged the soldiers open right and left,
“That I may see the rogues disperse!” he cried.
“My comfort is far, far above my pain,
And yet it grieves me that I may no more
Be executioner of my country's foes!”
And, last, he sent his duty unto you.

Crom. He that once gave to me hath taken him
Unto the joy for which we pant and strive,
No more to know or misery or pain.

“My son! Would God that I had died for thee!”
I pray you, gentlemen, await me here.

[*He goes into a tent.*

Har. Methinks that Cromwell shows but little faith
When he prefers that boy's life to his own,
So useful to his country. 'Tis not well.
I will exhort him to a better mind.

[*WHALLEY steps in front of him.*

Good sir! [*He tries to pass.*

Whal. Stir not! You shall not go to him!

Har. You grieve the spirit by restraining it.
These pourings forth, like water from the rock—

[*CROMWELL returns.*

Crom. I can bear all, through Him that strength-
eneth me.

[*FAIRFAX holds out his hand.* *CROMWELL takes it.*
I thank you, sir. Now, Ireton, you had said
He fled toward Leicester—Leicester. Let us on.
[*To WHALLEY.*] Give me your arm, good cousin.
Forward, men!

ACT II

SCENE I. CROMWELL'S *quarters in the camp at Saffron Walden.* CROMWELL and IRETON.

Crom. Now, since the Scots have seized their pay and gone,

Have yielded up the King to Parliament,
England is lulled, and like a rolling sea,
Beat into raging by contentious winds,
Doth slowly sink its fluctuating waves.

Ireton, thou sayst it is impossible
That our poor soldiers ever have their pay?

Ire. Why, these petitions do but little good.
I tell them so—

Crom. But we have done the work,
We've spent our strength, we've risked our limbs and
lives,
We soldiers, for this Parliament; and now
They fear and hate us, thwart our every wish.
This Hollis and his friends will never leave

Until the army pulls them out by th' ears!

Ire. Hold, hold! Thy language seemeth violent.
I place the constitution before all.
You would maintain it?

Crom. Always—if 'twas best.
Man, there are many *good* and *better* ways,
There's but one *best*. Now peace is ever *good*,
And law is *better*. Justice, though, is *best*,
Nor is it always either peace or law.

Ire. Cromwell, I almost fear you! Though my
mind,
In this great labyrinth, holds, I think, a clew,
Yet in its windings I can see no end.

Crom. Thou knowest that David held the ark of
God,
And with that ark went victory—

Ire. You mean
That we should hold the King? We think alike.
But King and Parliament must be at peace
Ere England's liberty is firm and sure.
Were there but six men fighting in this cause,
I'd be the seventh.

Crom. Oil and water. Well?

Enter FAIRFAX.

Fair. O sirs, I truly think the world is mad!

Such wonders happen as surpass belief.

The King is seized! Is seized!

Crom. By whom, by whom?

Fair. By nobody!

Crom. O, then you mean he's ill.

Ire. (aside). He jests at such a time—incredible!

Fair. No. I will tell you all this wondrous tale,
Unparalleled since temples sprang from earth
At a magician's wand.

Crom. That's not so strange
As how oaks grow from acorns. But proceed.

Fair. To Holmby House there came a certain
Joyce,

A cornet only, with five hundred men.
Pistol in hand, his hat upon his head,
Stamped to the King's room, told his Majesty
He'd come to bear him off. Next morning then
The King stood on the steps beside the house
And asked, before the Parliamentary guard,
By whose authority Joyce seized him thus.
He said, "The army." "Have you orders, then?"
The miscreant pointed to his armèd force
And cried, "Here's my commission!" Said the King,
"I never saw the like, but 'tis well writ,
And surely legible." They bore him off—

Ire. What! Bore him off! You mean they held
him there?

Fair. No: off they rode. Heard ever man the like!
Now we must hasten on and meet the King,
Persuade him to return to Parliament.
Must we not, Cromwell?

Crom. Yes, your excellency.

Fair. And for this wretched Joyce, he shall be
tried.

Ire. He said not who had sent him?

Crom. Surely not;
He said the army. If the army did,
There are too many men to try them all.

Fair. You would not try him!

Crom. He hath done no harm.
If, when we meet the King, he would return,
He can then do so.

Fair. Surely, he'll return.
But, sirs, this Joyce! Why, 'tis an unknown man!
What right has he to seize our sacred King?

Crom. What right had he, the Abi-Ezerite,
That son of Joash, Gideon, to arise?
But that God needed him and called him forth,
An unknown man, by ways unknown to all?
And shall we think that in these latter days
His vigilance, who watches o'er His folk

With never-failing care, hath timely failed,
His arm is shortened that it cannot save?
His ways are endless and diverse and strange,
He useth instruments we could not choose.

Fair. I do not fully see the force of this;
But if you're quoting, why, it seems to me
'Twas strange that daring and unlicensed band
Were not struck down with blindness for their act.

Crom. The instance that you mention faileth here,
For those went forth to take Elisha, sir;
He was a man of God, and not a king.

SCENE II. *The gardens of Hampton Court.* GERALD
LEROUY and MARY WILTSE discovered beneath the
trees, she arranging an armful of roses, he fingering
a lute.

Leroy. This is a garden of enchantment. See,
Far off beneath the shadow of the trees,
Yon red deer grazing—

Mary. 'Tis enchantment, sir,
To turn into a stag an old red cow!

Leroy. 'Tis false! I see his many-branched horns!

Mary. The poet's fancy multiplies each horn
Into twelve branches. That were surely slight
After your calling me a Venus, sir!

Leroy. Ah, Mary!

Mary. Gerald, hear your deer: "Moo!"

Leroy. She is my dear, whatever sound she makes!

[*He kisses her.*

Mary. Sir, you're unmannerly!

Leroy. You tempted me!

Come now, forgive me, and I'll sing to you.

[*She pulls a rose to pieces and blows the petals at him. LEROY, with his fingers wandering over the lute, sings.*

SONG.

Sweet maid, forbear

In wanton glee

The rose's velvet leaves to tear,

To blow at me!

For thus say I,

That when they die,

Fair ladies' spirits lightly fly,

And to the flowers' perfumed hearts repair.

Mary. O Gerald, is it months or is it years
Since we escaped from all the rush and noise,
You from the wars, and I from London town,
To rest here in the green and tranquil shade?

Leroy. There's no such thing as time, 'tis but like
heat,

Comparative; for, look you, when you're here,
There's an unmeasured space of ecstasy;
When you are gone, I cannot even say
If you were by an hour, a day, a week:
'Tis but the light withdrawn—I cannot see!

Mary. My love! But tell me, dear, what happens now.

I hear afar the echoes of the world,
As one in dozing hears the sounds of life
And, half-unconscious, fancies them his dream.

Leroy. They say the army and the Parliament
Have played at see-saw. When the force advanced,
The Parliament would promise what they asked,
And then repeal it when the army paused.
And thus, until the soldiers tired at last
And marched upon the city—

Leroy. But, strange to say, they did no injuries; Their generals held them back with wondrous strength.

O Mary, when I think of these events
I burn to leave the quiet of this place;
I long for some great deed, some signal act,
That I may prove my valor to my King!
I do not sleep by night, nor rest by day.

Mary. Alas, I pity thee, and wish thee peace!

Leroy. No! Wish me but the chance to prove my strength.

Better to bleed beneath ambition's spur
Than plod through life in passionless content!

Mary. Ah, see! The King is coming from the lake,

Where every noon he goes to feed the swans.

Enter KING CHARLES, conversing with FAIRFAX and followed by the EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, the EARL OF HERTFORD, ASHBURNHAM, ROBERT HAMMOND, LORD LAUDERDALE, and LADY FAIRFAX, CAPTAIN WILTSE, WHALLEY, and others.

K. Chas. Nay, good Sir Thomas, all thine arguments

May not persuade us to return with thee.

This Holmby House was dull; nor do I think
That thou wert all so ignorant of Joyce!

Fair. Your Majesty, he had no leave from me—

K. Chas. I will believe it when you hang the man.

Lady Fair. (aside to FAIRFAX). Thomas, how comes
it that he is not hanged?

Fair. (aside to LADY FAIRFAX). Why, Cromwell
thinks, my dear—

Lady Fair. O, “Cromwell thinks!”

Is he the only man who dares to think?

K. Chas. Sir, in this army, I would have you know,

I have as great an interest as yourself.

Fair. (aside). Alas, he leans upon a broken reed!

K. Chas. (to WHALLEY). Ah, my good Whalley, you who guard my rights,

Think not we have forgot you kept our friends,

Our chaplains, and allowed us services.

We trust the day may come when from our heart
We can reward thee.

Whal. Sire, those now approach
Who merit more your thanks.

K. Chas. Ah, modest man!

Enter CROMWELL and IRETON with their wives and ELIZABETH CLAYPOLE. They salute the King and present their wives.

Crom. Your Majesty, I here present to you,
My daughter. [Presents ELIZABETH.

K. Chas. 'Tis a sweet and comely maid.
Wiltse, thy daughter is about her age.

[WILTSE brings MARY forward, and the two girls wander off together.

K. Chas. (walking forward with CROMWELL and IRETON). Ah, Cromwell, thou and Ireton are strong men!

Ire. I pray our strength may ever be well used.

K. Chas. I doubt it not; and England needs you, sirs,

Not in the low ranks, swarming with the small,
But high and single in your strength and size,
Where all may see you, *noble*, as you are.

For, truly, what is all nobility
But that some time a king has noted it
Already by his side and called it forth?
Let's to the grape-vine arbor to converse:
That vine was planted in King Henry's time
And will outlast us, and perhaps our sons
And their sons' sons shall point to it and say,
"Here Charles and Cromwell talked when, spent and
worn,

Poor Charles sought refuge from his country's foes,
And from his own." But this were meagre fame.
O Cromwell, what a glorious thing is fame!
That when this frail and feeble frame is dust,
The memory of the greatness that was here
Lives, like an echo when the song is done.
Is it not noble?

Crom. No, Sire; not to me.
When I have left this low and brutish earth
I shall not care what the poor wanderers here
Shall think of me, for I shall be at rest,

Beyond the heat and burden of their day;
If so my life find favor in His sight,
To Whom alone I look for my reward.

Ash. (advancing). Your Majesty, I here present to
you

Young Robert Hammond, whose own excellence,
Joined with the honor of his uncle's name,
Shall thus ensure him welcome.

[HAMMOND salutes the King.

K. Chas. Truly, yes.

This is my chaplain's nephew. Welcome, sir.

Laud. (advancing). Sire, deign to see the Parliamentary lords;

They long have been awaiting answer here.

K. Chas. Well, I will see them now as any time.

Laud. Your Majesty, I trust, doth answer well.

K. Chas. No, Lauderdale; their terms are much too hard.

I would surrender to this Parliament
For twenty years' command on land and sea,
And, since you urge me, I would even yield
That my good friends be punished as they wish;
But take the covenant, desert my church—
I will not do this thing to save my crown,
Never to save my liberty or life!

Enter the EARL OF DENBIGH and two other Commissioners.

K. Chas. If you have any word from London, sirs,
I'll hear it, but no fancies of your own;
You shall put no tricks on me.

Denb. Sire, you err;
We are not those who trick with any man,
Much less your Majesty.

K. Chas. I mean not you,
But those that sent you. Here's my answer now;
I give it, and you fain must take it, sirs,
Although it were a ballad or a song.

Denb. Our mission, Sire, is of more consequence.
1st Com. (aside to DENBIGH). O, say no more, for
God hath closed his eyes.

[*Exeunt LORD DENBIGH and Commissioners.*
K. Chas. (aside to LEROY). Here, Gerald, go to
London with this gold;
Tell the astronomer to read my stars,
And bring me back his counsel. Leave to-night

Enter the DUKE OF ORMOND.
Our noble Ormond! Welcome, worthy friend!
Let all withdraw. [*All retire.*

Now, what of Ireland, sir?
Ourselves have heard much of your skilful work;

Your presence always is a power for good.

Or. Sire, I can lay that country at your feet.
Munster and Leinster, plundered by O'Niel,
Though Catholics, are hungering for peace,
And thus do all, and that to come to terms.
Give them but moderate freedom of their Church
And they are yours. Behold the summary.
Read at your leisure, Sire.

K. Chas. I thank you, friend.
You give me hope; nor do I yet despair
Of winning over or the Parliament
Or else the army's forces to my side;
Whichever joins with me, the other falls,
And I shall reign once more, indeed a king!
Come, let us go aside and talk of this.

[*Exeunt KING CHARLES and ORMOND.*

Enter SIR JOHN BERKELEY and IRETON.

Ire. Here, good Sir John, behold the army's
terms.

Will't please you look on them?

Berk. I thank you, sir.
I have, as you must know, much influence.
The Queen hath sent me here; and if there's aught
Displeases me—

Ire. It must be altered, sir.

Berk. This phrase, sir, is ill writ; the sense is good.

These propositions are much easier
Than those the Parliament hath brought to us.
I think I can persuade the King to these.
Let us consider every clause in turn.

[*They walk aside.*

Enter CROMWELL and ASHBURNHAM.

Crom. If I am honest, I have said enough;
If I am false, then nothing will suffice.
Yes, Ashburnham, I strive to serve the King;
Unless he has his rights, all is unsafe.
The army must support him, and it will;
So long as he is true will we be true.
We tender him our service and our terms.

Enter KING CHARLES and Train. BERKELEY and IRETON come forward.

Ire. Here are the army's propositions, Sire,
To which we humbly ask your signature.

K. Chas. (reading). I wish no man to suffer for
my sake;
You here demand the banishment of nine.
Naught I have ever done I so repent
As Strafford's death.

Ash. (aside to KING CHARLES). O Sire, you anger them!

K. Chas. Look, these three articles I will not sign; And if you really wish to come to terms, Then bring me propositions I can take.

Irc. Sire, we have plead enough.

Ash. O, listen, Sire, Never came peace to you on easier terms!

K. Chas. Why, I should play my game as best I can.

Irc. Sire, if you play a game, then give us leave To play our game as well. Your Majesty Would arbitrate with Parliament and us; We'll arbitrate with Parliament and you.

K. Chas. You cannot do without me; you will all Fall into wreck if I sustain you not.

Berk. (aside to KING CHARLES). You speak as if you had some secret strength; If this be so, Sire, since your friends know naught, Tell not these men!

K. Chas. Well, well, give here the sheet. Think not I turn away from you, my friends, [To IRETON. But things of moment need an hour's thought!

[*Excunt CROMWELL and IRETON.*

Leroy (*to BERKELEY*). What think you that his Majesty intends?

Berk. His kingly revolutions, good my friend, Are in the ark of his most sacred breast; It were presumption to lay hand on them.

Leroy. But are these plottings honest? Are they fair?

Berk. Hush, child; make not such questions of the King!

His touch, like Midas's, turns all to gold.

Leroy. It cannot cure the evil of these times; Perhaps our faith is less, alas the day!

K. Chas. Ormond and Lauderdale and Lanark, come,

And Herbert too; do all the rest withdraw.

[*They do so.*

Think not, my friends, I put my trust in those Whose hands are reeking yet with precious blood. No! England's nobles still are her defence. Go you to Ireland, Herbert; give them all, Law or no laws, that they shall ask of you.

[*To LAUDERDALE and LANARK.*] You, gentlemen, to London. Come aside, And we will plan the whole. [*To ORMOND.*] To Scotland you.

Enter CROMWELL and HAMMOND.

Ah, worthy General, we but now withdrew
To counsel of your terms. Well, kings must bow
When armies are victorious. Victory
Is ruler over kings, and in her hand
She bears the pardon for all licenses.

[*Exeunt KING CHARLES and Nobles.*

Crom. Dear Robin, you would leave this court,
you say,
And seek seclusion in the Isle of Wight?

Ham. I dread the many plots and intrigues here;
I fear some load may fall upon my back;
I do not, dare not trust my powers or strength.

Crom. Nor shouldst, my son; trust thou alone in
God,

Nor think that, if He will that thou be tried,
Thou shalt escape that trial by leaving here.
Because my soul doth love thee, I must speak.
Thou art the servant of thy country, boy,
And thou must lay aside the thought of self.

Ham. But, General, will you not regard your life?
'Tis surely precious for your country's sake.
O, let me tell you, if you know it not,
The army rages that you serve the court;
Noisy John Lilburn, screaming from the tower,
Cries that you make a bargain with the King.

Your life is perilled if you leave him not!

Crom. Boy, I shall do my duty. If the King
Keeps faith with me, I may not break with him,
For England needs a faithful ruler's strength.
And if the army goes beyond the law,
Think not the army will defy me long!
Go, Robin; may God be thy counsellor!

[*Exit HAMMOND.*

Enter ASHBURNHAM.

Ash. Ah, Cromwell, have you heard that London
news?

The army's adjutators meet and pray,
Saying that God hath given all to them;
That 'tis His work to change the government.
They plot to seize the King. They rail at you.

Crom. Yes; for precaution I must ask you now
To visit me less often near the camp.
God be my witness if my faith be true
To help the King. The army soon will meet
Near Hertford, and I make a last attempt
To reconcile their wishes and the King.

Ash. And if you fail?

Crom. Then I will warn the King.

Ash. Swear that you will!

Crom. Sir, I have given my word.

Ash. I ask your pardon and I trust you, sir.

Enter BERKELEY.

Berk. (to ASHBURNHAM). Friend, we are ordered hence.

Ash. What! ordered, sir?

Berk. Yes, by the army; they suspect us all. The soldiers force the suppliants from the King, Will not admit his friends, and drive us forth!

[*Excunt BERKELEY and ASHBURNHAM.*

Enter IRETON.

Ire. Cromwell, trust not the King; he plays us false!

He gives us words and words, and nothing more.

Crom. Speak not of us! Our country is in need! For, even as when Reuben was divided, There are great searchings of the hearts of men, And woe to those that fail and those that fall! To-night a man shall come into an inn Bearing a letter hidden by his side.

Ire. What purports this? Who sends the letter forth?

Crom. I think Charles Stuart sends the letter forth.

Ire. So soon! He held our hands this very hour!

You fear he plots against us even now?

Crom. Man, I fear nothing! God is on our side,
Nor will He give His people unto death.
Come to the “Blue Boar” inn at twelve this night,
Dressed as a trooper.

Ire. You will seize this note?

Crom. Ay! though 'twere guarded by a thousand
men;
For England's safety quivers in the scale!

SCENE III. *The yard of the “Blue Boar” Inn at Holburn. The Innkeeper closing and barring the house.*

Inn. 'Tis nearly midnight and the day is gone.
A wild and busy day, when swarms of men
Poured by like locusts: some to see the King,
Returning angry that they were refused,
And raging at the slights that he endured:
And others storming at the Parliament;
Some from the army, and content with naught,
Fierce at their generals, London, and the King.
In these ill times I scarcely dare to sleep.
My weary eyes see arrows round the moon.
Hark—how the frogs are booming by the creek;
Ah, 'tis a lonely sound to hear by night.

Well, none shall have admittance here till day.

[*He goes into the house.*

Enter CROMWELL and IRETON, disguised as troopers.

Crom. Ho, there, within! [Knocks.

Ire. Thou art deceived, my friend;
This place is closed, and all have gone to rest.

Crom. (knocking). They are awake, and but refuse
us room.

Unbar thy door or thou wilt lose that door!

Inn. (within). Are you Noll Cromwell, that you
order so?

There's none but he could force me open here!

Crom. Man, you are warned. Be wise.

Inn. (opening the door). What would you, sirs?
I was a soldier, and I know the tone
That brooks no waiting.

Crom. Bring us wine, my friend.

[*They seat themselves at a table in the yard. The
Innkeeper brings the mugs of wine and then
goes within.*

Crom. It will not storm, although the air is damp.
The moon is struggling there along the sky,
Silvering the floating mists that dim the stars.
On that same moon gazed Cæsar, stealing home
From some night-revel, or amid the woods

Of Britain, where the wolves howled through the
night

And all about him gleamed the Roman spears.
On that same moon He gazed, who once on earth
Bore likeness unto man, when, sad and worn,
He prayed amid the groves of Olivet.
And on that moon, unchanged, I now do gaze,
In ignorance of the future, knowing all
Their history, as others shall know mine.

Ire. I mind me once at Chester, by the wall
Men said that naught could pierce the masonry.
The wall that Cæsar built did Cromwell rend;
He built, and thou alone couldst overthrow.
But see, the time is past, the man comes not;
Our servant by the wicket brings no word.

Enter Servant.

Serv. A man came with a saddle on his head,
And even now he mounts upon his horse.

Crom. (*drawing his sword*). Bring in the man and
horse.

[*Servant goes out and returns with the Man and
Horse.*

Man. What means this, sirs?
I do naught treasonable, on my life!
I shall but give this horse to one beyond.

Crom. Our orders bid us search all passers-by;
Yet as thou seemest honest, by thy face,
I will but trouble thee a little, friend.
Take now thy saddle off and give it me,
And I will spare thy person.

Man. Many thanks.

[*He gives the saddle to CROMWELL, who goes into the house.*

You fellows have a fine headquarters here!
I would that I might stay and search as well;
I'd search those flagons on the table first.

Ire. Your searching would be thirsty labor, then,
For soldiers leave but empty cups behind.

Re-enter CROMWELL, who returns the saddle to the Man.

Crom. 'Tis well; pass on. A pleasant journey,
friend.

Man. I bow to both your worships. [Exit.

Crom. (to Servant). To thy post.
[Exit Servant.

Ire. Thou hast the letter?

Crom. Ay.

Ire. Its purport, then?

Crom. O, incurable perfidy!

Ire. What mean you? Speak! I pray you, tell
me, sir!

Crom. Ireton, King Charles may not be trusted more.

This is his letter, written to the Queen.
He saith that army, Parliament, and Scots
All court him now, and those that bid the best
Shall have him. He hath settled with the Scots
And with the Irish, and our peace is wrecked!
“I know in due time how to deal with rogues,”
He writes; “in place of silken garters”—

Ire. Ah!

Crom. “They shall be fitted to a hempen cord.”

Ire. Even as God’s spirit once deserted Saul,
So hath it surely left this man of blood.
For God abhorreth the deceitful man,
Him of the lying lips and double tongue;
God hath rejected him from being king.
Yea, He hath rent the kingdom from his hand
And given it unto—

Crom. Oh, hold thy peace!
The hand of God lies heavy on my heart.
Although the temple of man’s character
Be built of every virtue high and strong,
If the foundation be not rocks of truth,
Then is the noblest structure insecure.
Alas! The chaff of lying will not out
Even in the winnowing of adversity,

And what is goodly grain must be destroyed.
Give me thy hand, my son; the die is cast!

Ire. We leave this faithless Stuart to his fate.

Crom. There comes no safety to our land through
him.

Ire. Here is your letter unto Whalley, sir,
In which you urged him to protect the King;
And here your letter unto Charles himself,
Warning him that the army's many plans
Made Hampton perilous. I'll tear it here!
He plots to hang us.

Crom. Ireton! Stay thy hand!
Send thou those notes to Hampton Court this night.
Because this king has proved himself untrue
Thou shouldst not think that Cromwell breaks his
word.

SCENE IV. *A room in a house of LORD SOUTHAMP-
TON, in Titchfield. KING CHARLES and WILLIAM
LEGG.*

K. Chas. When expectation, like an eager hound,
Strains at his leash; when every minute casts
A weight of dread within the scale of thought,
How slowly turns the heavy wheel of time.

Legg. Your Majesty is weary. Pray you, rest.

K. Chas. They should be back ere this. Why come they not?

But thou art weary, friend; go to thy rest,
Thou hast good reason. Since the warning came
From Cromwell, since we fled from Hampton Court,
Thou hast had little pausing and no peace.
O Legg, that was a wild and fearful ride!
As thou and I slipped down the private way,
And took the road to Oatlands, once I turned
And saw above the dark mass of the trees
The serried battlements of Hampton Court
Clear cut against the gleaming silver sky;
I thought, "Fair Hampton, shall I see thee more?"
And then all thought was drowned in action. Fast
We galloped through the woods as night drew on;
And then the storm burst, whistling in the trees,
Whose cold and dripping branches smote my face,
And on these locks, once sleek with sacred oil,
The winter tempest poured its icy rain.

Legg. Sire, if it please you, tell your faithful Legg
Where do we tend, and why went Berkeley forth,
And Ashburnham?

K. Chas. My servant shall know all.
Our friends are gone unto the Isle of Wight;
Hammond, the Governor, is on our side.
We have had much discussing, thou hast seen.

We thought at first of leaving English shores,
But time was short in which to find a ship,
And ere we leave the country we would know
The outcome of the army's rendezvous.

Our friends have gone to west as we are east,
That none may know where thou and I are hid,
They will be certain of this Hammond's mind
Ere they will tell him; if he seems unsafe,
And if he gives us not our liberty,
And keeps our coming secret, we will sail.
But yet I wonder that they come not back.

Legg. Your Majesty, I hear the noise of hoofs,
Beating like hammers, nearer and more near.

K. Chas. Then all is surely well. Ah, they have
come!

They stop without. O Legg, my heart beats fast!
In terror, oft, beneath the kingly guise,
The man shows forth—

Enter ASHBURNHAM.

Ashburnham! Well, what news?

Ash. Sire, we are late. Last night we could not
cross;
The wind prevented. Carisbrooke was reached
At ten this morning; Hammond had gone out.
We overtook him soon, and Berkeley said,

“Who think you, now, is very near to you?”
He said he knew not. “ ‘Tis the good King Charles,
Who flies from Hampton, fearing for his life.”
When Hammond heard this he grew ashen-white,
And fell a-trembling till he well-nigh dropped:
And cried that twixt his duty, Sire, to you
And trust unto the army he was rent.
I liked him not, yet, Sire, what could we do?
He then spoke much, but of no consequence,
But promised that, in truth and honesty,
He would do all that lay within his power.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir John requests that you remember him,
For Mr. Hammond grows impatient. [Exit.

Legg. Here!

Ash. Yes, he has come to make his promise good.

K. Chas. What! Hammond here? O, I am captured, then!

Jack, Jack, thou hast undone me!

Ash. (drawing his sword). Say not so!

God knows I did my best! I'll kill this man!

K. Chas. No, no! His death would then be laid to me.

’Tis now too late to think of anything;

I can but walk where thou hast forced me, man,

And leave the rest with God.

Ash. (turning his sword). O, let me die!

K. Chas. (seizing him). Ashburnham! sheathe thy sword!

Nay, I command.

[ASHBURNHAM *does so.*

Bring up this man. [Exit ASHBURNHAM.

We'll strive to greet him well.

Re-enter ASHEBURNHAM with BERKELEY and HAMMOND, who salute the King.

K. Chas. Ah, Hammond, 'tis not long since thou and I

Were walking by the lake at Hampton Court,
And you were then our guest; but now we come
To seek in turn your hospitality.

Ham. Sire, let me place my service in your hands.

K. Chas. With you I know we shall find liberty,
And secrecy as well. Is it not so?

Ham. I am the servant of the army, Sire;
There is no choice for me but faithfulness.

K. Chas. Thou art no courtier, Hammond; I do
trust

Thou wilt be true.

Ham. I'll do my duty, Sire.
And I must tell my masters you are here.

Will't please your Majesty prepare to leave?

[*He retires.*

K. Chas. The army holds us in its iron hand!
Come on, my friends; he must not see us quail!

ACT III

SCENE I. *A room in Whitehall.* GENERAL HARRISON, SIR HARRY VANE, HENRY MARTEN, CROMWELL, and IRETON *in conversation.*

Vane. You may not judge a cause by the events, Or prosperous or otherwise, my friends, But by its principles; nor should our faith Or patriotism fail as we proceed Our march unto our radiant promised land; As Israel of old we struggle on.

[*Noise without.* CROMWELL hastens to the window and returns very pale.

Crom. The King is come! Our great work is commenced!

Let us resolve our answer to the world By what authority we try this man.

Mart. In the name of the Commons and Parliament assembled, And of all the good people of England.

Vane. This king is but a servant, not a sovereign.

Why should we have a king? 'Tis dangerous.
Then let the people only be supreme,
Not have our Parliament controlled by force.
When Colonel Pride late drove the members forth,
It was an unwise deed.

Crom. I think not so.

It was by the great law, necessity.

*Enter the EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON and the MARQUIS
OF HERTFORD. Enter from the other side, unper-
ceived, JOHN MILTON.*

Har. (approaching the Noblemen). Lo, as the Scripture saith that we should do,
We bind their kings with chains, and, verily,
Their nobles shall be fettered soon with iron,
For they did sin; nor would they yet believe,
O infidels! And therefore all their days
Did God consume them, and their years were grief!

Milton (advancing). [To HARRISON.] You do
pervert the Bible by such speech.

That passage which you cited latterly
Refers to Israelites and not to nobles.

Har. Thou long-haired cavalier, what dost thou
know?

South. We know our Bible well enough for this;
It saith, "Touch not the Lord's anointed king!"

Milton (to SOUTHAMPTON). And yet God's Spirit
was withdrawn from Saul

Who was anointed. Yea, even more than this:
That Ehud and that Samuel slaughtered kings,
Not without certain countenance of God.

It is most honorable an act to teach
A lawless king and all his worshippers
That mortal man, nor his imperious will,
But justice only, is supreme on earth.

Hert. But by what justice do you try a king?
He is accountable to none but God.

Milton. By such a precept you destroy all law;
For if the king should choose to break his oath,
We are then helpless. Why, our ancient laws
Hold, "If the king discharge his office ill,
He shall not even retain the name of king."

Hert. You are a boy, fresh from your school de-
bates.

Mart. No, 'tis the Cambridge lady!

Milton. Marten! Marten!—
Lo, Aristotle saith 'tis never just
Nor for the public good, since that all men
Are made by nature equal, that one man
Should be the lord and master without law.
And Xenophon and Cicero alike
Tell how the Greeks adored Tyrannicides.

South. O, leave your ancients, since the greatest
Man

Wills that the rights of kings should be observed;
He saith, “ Whose image is upon this coin? ”
“ ’Tis Cæsar’s.” “ Render unto Cæsar, then,
All that is Cæsar’s; what is God’s, to God.”

Milton. O foolish man, thou dost convict thyself!
To whom dost thou belong; not to a king.
God fashioned thee in image of Himself,
And in thy nostrils breathed the breath of life.
Why, even heathen Ovid knew this truth,
For what saith he of man’s appearance here?—
“ A man was born: or from the seed divine
Him wrought the great Creator, ancestor
Of all the higher life; or recent earth,
But late emergent from the crystal air,
Retainèd still the seeds of kindred heaven,
Which Titan’s son, when mixt with river waves,
Formed in the image of the regnant gods.”
Thou dost remember how a king was given?

Mart. We know that God in wrath gave kings and
quails,

But not intended then that kings should quail.

South. That is an insult, sir, which may not pass—
An insult to my master.

Milton.

Nay, not so;

My friend has meant no insult, I am sure.

Mart. 'Twas but an idle jest.

South. (*to MILTON*). You fear to fight.

Milton. Our valor needs no proof.

South. Your army's, no,

But you are frightened. [*To HERTFORD.*] 'Tis some nobleman,

A recreant traitor.

Milton. I will teach you pride,
As Gideon taught the men of Succoth, sir.
Bring here some foils.

Mart. (aside to MILTON). Beware, he fences well;
You cannot parry with that tongue of yours.

[*MILTON and SOUTHAMPTON fence.* *MILTON disarms his adversary.*

South. (recovering his foil). 'Tis but a chance!

[*They proceed.*

Milton. You think it was a chance.

[*He breaks through SOUTHAMPTON's guard and places the point of his foil over his heart.*

Crom. 'Tis finely done! You're very skilful, sir.

Milton. O, not as once I was; my eyes grow tired.

Hert. Who is this youth?

Milton. I am John Milton, sir.

Hert. Ah! I have read your works with interest,
sir.

It seems that you have left Apollo's train.

Milton. Yes, for the present. I have often thought
That Argus should have been the poet's god.

Hert. How should that be, sir?

Milton. Since the poet, sir,
Should have for nature many hundred eyes
To see innumerable beauties others pass.

South. (*aside to CROMWELL*). General, we bring a
summons from the King.

The treaty he consents to make with you
He gives his kingly word shall not be broken.

Crom. For all our fighting would you offer us
A little piece of paper? Tell him, "No!"
There is no power that could force me now
To place my country's safety in his hands.
No man shall twice betray that sacred trust.

[*The two Noblemen bow and excunt.*

Vane (*to MILTON*). We've looked some time for
poems from you, sir.

Milton. O, I have laid aside my singing-robcs,
To give more than my left hand to our cause;
Have gone from out my pleasing solitude,
Embarking on a rough and troubled sea.

Har. (*to MILTON*). Sir, I would ask you something.

Milton. Sir, proceed.

Har. In your great Hymn to the Nativity,
It striketh me that there is overmuch
Of those ungodly paganisms.

Milton. Sir!

I am a patient man, but when you dare
To criticise my verse in such a tone—

Har. I spoke but as one Christian to his brother.
Doth not the Scripture say we thus should do?

Milton. 'Twas not the Christian, sir, that you ad-
dressed,

It was the poet!

Mart. (to MILTON). You do know all these?
Here's General Cromwell, Ireton, Harrison.

Milton. I am most glad to meet with England's
chiefs. [All bow.

Why is not General Fairfax also here?

Mart. His lady doth admonish him at home.

Har. Some men can rule all else except their
wives!

Milton. And others go about in fear of ghosts!

Vane. Marten, I do not understand our seal:
"In the first year of freedom," thus it reads,
"By God's blessing restored." "Restored": How's
this?

Mart. Restored unto the form of commonwealth.

Vane. But we have never had that form before!

Mart. One text hath often vexed my spirit much;
It is, "The sight was unto him restored
Who was born blind." But I now understand;
'Tis like our seal: that was to him restored
Which by all right he should at first have had!

Milton. When in Du Bartas, Sylvester thus spoke:
"Those that in Norway or in Finland chase
The thin-skinned marten for his precious case,"
He did not think of thee in any case!

Mart. Thy puns, my friend, are even weightier
Than are the awful titles of thy books.

Vane. I wish to ask a question of you all:
You do not purpose harm unto the King?

Crom. That would be surely thought an awful
deed.

I may not yet advise you of our thoughts;
I pray that God will bless our counsels here.

Vane. Cromwell, I heard your arguments last
night,
Yet I am unconvinced. If at this court
You think the King is proven culpable,
What will you do?

Crom. We will cut off his head
Although he wear the crown upon it then;
That idle gold too long hath sanctified
The brain that plotted evil to this land.

Vane. I leave the Parliament upon this day,
Nor shall I soon return. You do not well. [Exit.

Mart. Well, old Sir Harry is our enemy;
And as for young Sir Harry—

Ire. What of him?

Milton. Pray you remember that he is my friend.

Mart. Oh! If he lives—he will be old Sir Harry!
Come, Milton, I have much to say to thee.

[MILTON and MARTEN *bow and exeunt.*

Enter JOHN CROMWELL.

Crom. Ah, cousin, welcome. All are well at home?

J. Crom. Yes, cousin. I come not to speak of
them,

But of the horrid crime that's purposed here.

O, let me pray you, do not bring on us
A stain that may not ever be effaced,
By slaughter of the King. It shall not be!

Crom. John, it's not mine, it is the army's work.

J. Crom. Give me your promise; you could hold
them back.

Save England from a hideous parricide!

Let not our country by all other lands
Be viewed as some vile monster, gorged with blood,
That battens on the sacred flesh of kings.

Crom. Cousin, beseech you, cease. When it's re-
solved

What shall be done, then I will send you word.

J. Crom. (aside). He shall not live if he doth do this thing;

I shall but seek a fitting instrument.

Enter LEROY.

Ah, the King's minstrel! Fate hath sent him here.

[*To LEROY.*] You came with our most noble King, I think.

He is the pale ghost of the once bright moon,
His lustre vanished—

Leroy. If the sun were gone,
He then would shine in heaven as before!

J. Crom. Ay, poet, lay that simile to heart.
Some day, perhaps, that burning sun may set,
And we, the little stars, can then be seen.

Leroy. I care not for myself. But I would die;
I should not fear to die, to serve my king.

J. Crom. Thy death, good youth, would help but little, now,

Another's death. But shame thou wouldest not dare?

Leroy. Shame would be honor, suffered for my king!

J. Crom. Kill, then, his murderer. Behold that wretch! [Motions to CROMWELL.

Leroy. His murderer! They mean to kill the King!

J. Crom. Hush! Yes. I am the cousin of that man,
Yet will I tell to you what Cromwell is:
A monster, boy, compact of every vice
That stains the earth. In youth a libertine,
In age a hypocrite. His flatterers
Would search in vain to find a single trait
Pure, clean, and true in all his character.
But hold; do nothing rashly. Go with me.
We may wait long before our time is come.

Leroy. I shall not fail you; I will wait till death.

[*They go out together.*]

Ire. If we should spare this king, the curse of
Saul,

Who did save Agag, would descend on us.

Har. (*to CROMWELL*). Surely thou dost not fear
to kill one king,

When Joshua slaughtered five at Makkedah.

Crom. O comrades, let me go; I've sought God's
will

In agony and tears throughout the night.
Why do we walk in shadows all our days?
O, give us light to guide us through this world
Wherein our weary feet go oft astray!
O, give us light to see and choose Thy path!—
Come in and pray with me; my soul is rent!

SCENE II. *The last day of the trial. Westminster Hall.*

JOHN BRADSHAW seated in a crimson velvet chair, robed in scarlet. Before him a desk with velvet cushions. Two clerks below at a desk, bearing the sword and mace. Court at side benches (R.), which are draped in scarlet. CROMWELL and MARTEN seated on either side of the new seal. Galleries above filled with people. Among them LADY FAIRFAX.

Enter KING CHARLES, accompanied by thirty-two Officers bearing partisans; Sergeant-at-arms, HARRISON, LEROY, SOUTHAMPTON, and Servants. He is conducted to a crimson velvet chair facing the court. The guard divides on each side. His servants and friends stand left front.

Leroy. All in prophetic scarlet, hue of blood.

Har. (to KING CHARLES). Stuart, remove your hat before the court.

[*The King presses on his hat in silence.*

South. O, bid me strike that traitor to the earth, That his vile frame may grovel as his soul.

K. Chas. Nay, friend; our royal rage strikes not a dog.

And let them scorn this gray and discrowned head;
A king despised is but a piteous sight.

Brad. All are assembled; open now the gates.

[*The great gates at back are thrown open, revealing a crowd.*

Proceed, clerk, with the roll-call.

Clerk. Henry Marten.

Mart. Here.

Clerk. Oliver Cromwell.

Crom. Here.

Clerk. Thomas Fairfax.

[*Pause.*

Lady Fair. Thomas Fairfax hath too much wit to
be here.

[*Laughter and tumult in the crowd.*

Brad. In the name of the people of England—

Lady Fair. The people of England hold you in
horror!

Har. Fire into the gallery!

[*Guards raise their muskets.* BRADSHAW signs to
them not to fire.

Brad. Charles Stuart, here in Parliament assem-
bled,

The English Commons call you to account,

Sensible of the evil and the woe

Brought on our nation. For the blood that flowed

We now make inquisition. Read the charge.

Clerk. Charles Stuart, being intrusted by the people—

K. Chas. (*interrupting*). Hold!

[He touches the Clerk with his cane, the head of which falls. He starts and the people murmur.

Not “intrusted by the people,” sir.

For they were mine by my inheritance.

I am accountable to none but God,

Nor can you try a king by any law.

Brad. Sir, you must know the pleasure of the court.

K. Chas. By your favor, sir.

Brad. Nay, sir; by your favor.

You must not fall again into this talk.

You here are a delinquent, and the court

Craves answer of you: not these discourses.

[*To Clerk.*] Proceed and do your duty.

K. Chas. Duty, sir!

Clerk. Charles Stuart, being intrusted by the people

With power limited to rule by law,

Preserving both their rights and liberties,

Strove to erect a tyrant’s government

To overthrow our freedom. And by war,

A traitor, rose against his Parliament;

Guilty of burning and rapine and spoil,
He is impeached of treason and of crime,
The enemy of England's commonwealth.

Brad. You have been prayed to answer to this charge,

That trial and judgment might be justified.

K. Chas. I am the King; you are my subjects here,

You owe me duty, and no Parliament
Has the authority which you assume.
You are not even rightful Parliament.
I know my people do absolve me all,
Yet will I not betray myself so much,
And royal dignity, as to respond.

Brad. Sir, now a third time you affront this court.

[Cries from crowd of "Justice!" and "Execution!"

Clerk, witness the default. You heard the charge,
And you refuse to answer—once again?
The only rightful power of a king
Is from the people by consent derived;
Whereas the Parliament intrusted you
To see their laws in justice executed,
You have endeavored to subvert those laws
Throughout your reign, to seize a tyrant's power
And force us from our duty. By your wars

Your people bled, and now this court is here
In answer to the nation's cries to God.

Therefore this court resolves to sentence you.
Now, have you more to say?

K. Chas. I have no more.

Brad. Then, sir, the court will speak.

K. Chas. I wish one word,
That you would hear me as concerns the charge.

Brad. Sir, we must now proceed; the time is past.

K. Chas. I see your heavy imputations, sir;
And whatsoever sentence you put on me—

Brad. We must obey the Scripture when it saith,
To acquit the guilty is as much a crime
As to condemn the innocent; the law
Affirms unto a public enemy
The sentence of this court, which you shall hear.

Clerk. Charles Stuart, for the crimes contained in
the charge this court doth adjudge you tyrant, traitor,
murderer, and public enemy, and doth decree that
you shall be carried back to the place whence you
came and from thence to the place of execution,
where you shall be put to death by the severing of
your head from your body.

Brad. The sentence now read and published is the
act, sentence, judgment, and resolution of the whole
court.

[*They all rise.*

K. Chas. Will you hear me a word, sir?

Brad. Sir, you are not to be heard after sentence.

K. Chas. No, sir!

Brad. No, sir; by your favor, sir. Guards, withdraw your prisoner.

K. Chas. I may speak after sentence—by your favor, sir—the sentence, sir—

[The guards surround him and strive to force him to leave.]

Sir, I do—I am not suffered to speak—expect what justice—other people will have—

[Exeunt KING CHARLES amid cries from the people.]

Brad. Let the judges now come forward and sign the warrant.

[BRADSHAW signs. Another signs. CROMWELL signs and draws the pen across MARTEN's face.]

Leroy (to SOUTHAMPTON). Lo, Cromwell's malice! How the devil jokes!

South. A jester's mask hides oft a pain-wrung face.

SCENE III. *A room in the banqueting-house, Whitehall.*

A window at back open to the floor. Noise of the scaffold building without. CROMWELL, IRETON, and HARRISON.

Ire. They say that Charles slept soundly all the night.

Har. And he will sleep to-night more soundly yet.

Crom. I sought the Lord for hours in my pain
That this thing should not be; yet, when I rose
And strove to say that I would save this man,
My tongue clove to my mouth—that was a sign.
I fell before the window, gazing out:
There was no darkness, though there was no moon;
A ghostly light struck upward from the snow.
An instant's sudden stillness caught the roar
Of London—such a breath of quiet as comes
Alike unto the city and the sea.
I heard a voice cry out within my soul,
“Cromwell, break thou in pieces the oppressor!”
Strange dreams distressed me when at last I slept,
Thousands of formless phantoms crowding down
And down and down upon me. Antic shapes
That grew so great it was an agony

To look upon them; dwindling then, they shrunk
And set my teeth on edge with thready thinness!

Ire. Ay, Cromwell, 'tis God's will, and but thy
flesh

Torments thee thus.

Crom. What does Charles Stuart now?

Har. He parts from those whose curse it yet shall
be

That they were born of him! Yea, root and branch,
Thus shall we tear the wicked from the land!

Crom. I saw him when they came at Hampton
Court;

I mind me how he caught them in his arms.
The girl is scarcely thirteen—my Mary's age.
They do not wholly understand—not yet—
I—hush! [The crying of children heard without.

Ire. They take them now away, I think.

[CROMWELL bursts into tears.

Har. Cromwell! You shame us all by yielding
thus!

Your hand is on the plow—

Crom. Be silent, fool!

I do not mourn for the unfaithful King;
I weep the man, I weep the suffering man!

*Enter KING CHARLES, a Bishop, Officers, and Sol-
diers.* They hesitate on seeing the Generals.

K. Chas. March on, apace.

1st Sol. O, may God bless you, sir!

[*The Colonel strikes him.*

K. Chas. Thy punishment exceedeth the offence.

[*He steps through the window onto the platform.*

Enter, with HERTFORD and attendants, the PRINCESS ELIZABETH, and the DUKE OF GLOUCESTER.

Duke of Gl. (seizing CROMWELL'S hand). O, save dear father, sir; they say you can!

Prin. Eliz. (clasping his knees). O sir, quick, quick! You have a little girl!

Crom. (springing up). Ireton, remove these children! O, my God!

[*His face becomes convulsed. He throws the cushion of the chair at IRETON, striking him.*

Hert. This demon doth but mock our agony.

[*Exeunt Children and attendants.*

K. Chas. (without). I shall say short prayers, then thrust out my hands;

I have a good cause and a faithful God

Both on my side.

[*Pause.*

Remember.

[*Pause.*

[*The sound of the axe falling. A groan from the people.*

Exe. (without). This is the head of a traitor.

SCENE IV. *A room in Whitchall. The coffin of the King on a table in front. SOUTHAMPTON and LEROY watching.*

South. My noble, gentle master! Ah, my heart,
Thy misery is past relief of tears!

Leroy. O, may all curses fall upon their heads
Who thus have murdered God's anointed king!

South. What is the hour?

Leroy. My lord, the midnight bell.
[Bell tolls twelve times.

Look who approaches, like some spectre thought
Which through the guilty mind, unsummoned, steals.

Enter CROMWELL, wrapped in a black cloak and bearing a torch.

South. Hush, boy!

Leroy. 'Tis he!

South. Who?

Leroy. Cromwell! the arch-fiend!

Who comes to gloat above the sainted clay
Yet bleeding from the murderer's felon hand.
O, ghoul! He shall not further—

South. Be thou still.

Crom. (opening the coffin and lifting the torch). In
death once more thou art a king indeed.

The present swims before me. Is this true?

[*He lays his hand on the hand of CHARLES.*

Ay, cold, cold, cold. O, stern necessity!

Charles, 'twas not I that slew thee, 'twas thyself;
I would have saved thee, Charles, yet could not so.

High and secure thou wert in kingly power,

And from that mountain didst thou start a stone

Against our England's freedom and our rights;

Lo, in its downward course it gathered weight

Till thou, pulled down from off thine eminence,

Wert crushed thyself beneath the avalanche.

That rigid face brings memories to me,

How once, when boys, we met, and how we fought,

You smote me, I would not endure the blow.

I see that boy's face in thy features now,

And, look, I weep for him—a noble boy!

O, how this form of ours doth suffer change,

As if to teach us 'tis but as a cloak

Of use a little time to wrap a soul!

At first the pink and white of rounded bloom,

Then comes the deeper glow of middle age,

Which slowly sallows in the rain and wind

Till through the falling flesh, though faintly still,

Shows forth the hideous outline of the skull.

Yet wherefore should we fear this, we who know
That from this tenement the unharmed soul

Hath fled to fairer mansions? No reproach
Now smites me as I gaze upon thy face;
And, Charles, thou wilt forgive me when we meet,
For God hath led me onward unto this.
The future brings unrest and painful wars,
Danger and watchfulness by day and night;
I serve my country—that is more than peace.

ACT IV

SCENE I. *The gardens of Brocksmouth House, overlooking the ravine and the hill beyond.* CROMWELL and WHALLEY walking to and fro.

Crom. The trees are blotted out upon the slope,
But their black outline saws the dim gray sky;
The stream is like a band of tempered steel.

Whal. You supped in town?

Crom. Yes, I have need of strength.
And then I coursed about with my commands.
Seest thou that hut, down lower in the glen?
No—further left—there, where the banks are flat?

Whal. Yes, yes, I see.

Crom. Well, it's the one pass near,
And Pride and Lambert had it. Lesley's horse
Came down and drove them out and captured three.

[*Sound of a trumpet heard.*

Whal. Ah, some one comes across.

Crom. We almost hear

Their words, so far the sound comes in the mist.
That black band opposite, upon the slope,
Is where the cornfield covering the steep
Ends, and the forest darkens all the crest.

Enter a Soldier with a wooden arm.

Crom. What is thine errand?

Sol. General, I was seized this morning at the house below there and they took me to General Lesley. His ministers were mouthing about him: "Go down, go down. They are delivered into thy hands!" Said he to me, "Do ye mean to fight?" Said I, "What do you think we're here for?" "Soldier," said he, "you shipped half your men and all your big guns." And said I, "If you please to draw down your force, you'll find both men and guns a-waiting for ye!" And said a poor officer, "How durst I be so saucy to the General?" And said I, "I answered what he asked me!" And they sent me back.

Crom. Very well. How many men has Lesley, think you?

Sol. About twice ours.

Crom. Why! We shall have to double courage, then.

You've something more to say?

Sol. Well, General, I for one lost twenty shillings by this business. They took 'em.

Crom. Here are forty, my friend.

Sol. I thank your excellency. And I'll send 'em home to-morrow—when I've got back my twenty.

[*Exit.*]

Whal. Cousin, I have the chance I long have sought

To ask a single question.

Crom. Speak, good Whalley.

Whal. Cromwell, you know I love and honor you. Then tell me that the stories of the war In Ireland were false; that, at Tredagh And elsewhere, all the horrors I have heard Were but the vile inventions of your foes!

Crom. Whalley, believe the stories thou hast heard.

Whal. Nay, Cromwell, not the worst!

Crom. Thou foolish man! I am persuaded that a righteous judgment Fell on those barbarous wretches, who imbrued Their hands in innocent blood. Didst thou not see How, through my bitterness, much life was saved, Since thus the enemy were filled with fear? Else were that work a cause for deep regret. No, 'twas the will of God. I mind me how

I stood before the fortress, all my thought
Whirling in circles: "Can I do this thing?"
I prayed for blindness, and I shouted, "Charge!"
There came a blank of action. I saw naught,
Felt naught. And then—the victory was ours!
I felt my arm was wet, and looking down
I saw that all my suit was soaked with blood.
I had not even seen one dying face,
Heaven was so merciful to my poor flesh.—
Whalley, what think you of George Monk? I heard
You liked him not, and it's a worthy man.

Whal. He's mum. Why, like a book, he only tells
His name—unless you open him by force.

Enter MONK and LAMBERT and others.

Crom. (to LAMBERT). What think you of our
state and chances now?

Lamb. O, we are compassed round on every side;
The sea doth lie behind us—

Crom. That is well!

We burn our ships, we can but forward then.

Lamb. Cromwell, the pass is blocked at Coppers-
path,

The enemy above us on the hills.

Only a miracle could save us now.

Crom. "Mine enemies would daily swallow me;
Many are they that fight against Thee, Lord.

What time I am afraid I trust in Thee!"

Whal. The men are sick; they die on every side.

Crom. "Fear not the pestilence that walks by night."

"He shall deliver those that trust in Him."

Let all the army seek the will of God.

(Give forth instructions.) I will do the like. [Exit.

[*All disperse, leaving MONK and WHALLEY.*

Monk. You stay?

Whal. You, too. You took the covenant!

Monk. Sir!

Whal. I heard they kept you prisoner till you did,
Then is it not the truth?

Monk. I warn you, sir,

Who follows truth too close upon the heels
Will some day, certain, have his brains kicked out!
But where's the need that you and I should pray?
Surely the General's prayers will save us all.

Whal. I marvel at his calmness. He must know
They plot his fall in London every hour.

He fights now with a halter round his neck.

Monk. And if he slips?

Whal. Ah, it will tighten fast!
If he should lose this battle, all his past,
Which now the nation praises, would be blamed.
There are two aspects of each being's life;

Look through the rosy window or the blue,
And change the people's standpoint, all is changed.
His faults will blind them to his solid worth;
For, look you, sir, held close against your eye,
A very little object hides the sun.

Re-enter CROMWELL and, from the other side, LAMBERT and others.

Crom. Friends, all my soul is quiet, and my heart
Enlarged in hope and faith. O, fear not ye!
For God will hear us and appear to us.—
They're shogging on the right! Lesley comes down!
The Lord hath delivered them into our hands!
Lambert, come here. His right wing's coming out,
It's free to be attacked on any side!
Take it in flank and front and they'll retreat
Back on their main—and then the day is ours!

Lamb. Sir, 'twas my very thought!

Monk. 'Twas not my thought.

But *Cromwell's* thoughts are never-failing good.
General, they have the numbers and the hills;
Our soldiers have despair and discipline—
Two things to make them fight. I say, we fight,
Which if you do, why, I will lead the van;
For neither ramparts nor the solid rocks
Are such a bulwark as the flesh of men.

Crom. We charge to-morrow. Watch and pray
to-night;

Be all in readiness; go through the camp.

Meet in two hours, that we draw the plans.

[*Exeunt all but CROMWELL and WHALLEY.*

Hold, Whalley, I am weary; let us rest.

Whal. You should not weary in well-doing, sir.

Crom. I know that thou dost never rest, my friend,
And thou hast earned the right thus to reprove;

But I have lost the vigor of my youth—

Would my corruptions did as fast decrease!

(Pray for me, good my cousin, in this respect.)

The trees that flourish in a sheltered vale

Are green and fresh through many tranquil years;

The unprotected pine that breasts the storm,

High on the barren rocks, falls ere its time.

Whalley, I long for home. I woke to-day

In the white stillness of the early morn;

Ere thought had raised the curtain of my brain,

A cock's three cries fell on my drowsy ear:

I fancied I was at my farm once more.

It seemed I rose, and felt the chill, clear air,

And smelled the flowers and the fresh-cut grass,

And saw the mist, like smoke, above the stream,

The gray swamp-willows, silver in the wind,

And far away the steeple of the church.

And all the pleasant labors of the day
Arose before me, soon to be performed:
A walk with Bess to see them milk the cows,
Which now were lying in the dripping grass;
A ride with Noll—with—Whalley, when he died
A dagger pierced my heart, indeed it did.

SCENE II. *In CROMWELL'S camp at evening. Soldiers around a fire. At one side a Sentry guarding a bowl of milk.*

1st Sol. Young David Burton died an hour ago,
Griped with disease and tearing up the earth;
But better so than waste and linger here.

I tell you, Steadfast Andrews, there's no hope.

2d Sol. We're caught like rats; we shall be stabbed
or drowned.

3d. Sol. They've twice our forces.

1st Sol. Listen to the sea!
It groans and groans and gasps, and then it groans!
This wind and hail cut like a Scottish knife.
O, I am cold and hungry.

4th Sol. Courage, man!
The General feeds us with the best he has.

1st Sol. You give blank comfort. All about us
here

Are demons, watching with distorted smiles.
The hungry sea rolls up, an evil gray;
The wind whirls clots of foam across the rocks.
Sniff the damp salt that mats our dripping hair;
Now turn, look back. Upon those shadowy hills
Lie crouched the masses of our eager foes!
To-morrow they will sweep around the camp
And warm this frozen ground with our hot blood!

2d Sol. O, Heaven, we are lost!

3d Sol. Call not on Heaven,
It hath forgot us. All forebodings point
Straight to defeat and slaughter.

1st Sol. Man, 'tis true.

[*Pause.*

Seest thou that bowl, the army's guarded store?
Thou seest it—white against the tent-pole there?
If I could raise up to my parching lips
That guarded bowl and drink, I'd not despair.
But I have asked and 'tis refused. I'll try.

[*He advances, unseen by the Sentry.*

*Enter, at back, CROMWELL and WHALLEY, unseen by
Soldiers.*

Crom. Whalley, that rascal goes to take the milk.
I'll punish him! Hold back, I go alone.

[*He advances in the shadow.*

3d Sol. I've heard it said the General, too,
despairs.

2d Sol. Yes. Every one despairs. There is no
hope!

4th Sol. If Philip gets his bowl, it is a sign.

[*1st Sol. seizes the bowl and raises it to his lips.*

*CROMWELL inverts it over his head. All laugh
loudly.*

1st Sol. (choking). Dog! Cur!

Crom. Thou wert a calf! A greedy calf!

1st Sol. Thou liest!

[*He springs at CROMWELL. They exchange a few
blows. The others gather round. They clinch.*

CROMWELL throws the soldier. Shout.

Crom. That was a trick of Hutchinson's, my
friends;

When he and I met on the football field

I feared him more than I do armies now.

Whal. (aside to CROMWELL). Cousin, your dignity!

Crom. My dignity?

Well, it is healthy and will stand a shock.

For those whose dignity is so infirm

It quakes and topples at the slightest blow

Have really but a vain pomposity.

Why is this such a pale and sombre crowd?

[*Coming forward into the light.*

Men, trust in God, and keep your powder dry!

4th Sol. It is the General!

3d Sol. (to 1st Soldier). Ah, what hast thou done!

1st Sol. (to CROMWELL). I do not fear you, sir; I know you're just.

Crom. Comrades, you please me more by speaking thus

Than if you bowed and trembled at my name;
Let but the evil man who shrinks from light
Fear Cromwell.

1st Sol. O, sir, let us die for you!

Crom. (to WHALLEY). There's that which is worth more than dignity;

Men do not give their lives for cold respect.

[*To Soldiers.*] Just now I passed a group below the knoll,

And heard a cornet praying with his men.
(Truly, I think that he who prayeth best
And preacheth best will also fight the best.)
They did not shiver there beside a fire,
But stood like English soldiers at their arms,
And prayed for strength, with strength to aid that prayer.

Look not so grieved, my friends; I blame you not;
The night is cold, and ye are worn and ill.

Your General does not come here to reprove,

He comes to bring you comfort, strength, and hope;
For Heaven, in mercy that doth never fail,
Hath opened to us a way of deliverance.
Therefore be strong and watchful!

All. Sir, we will!

SCENE III. *The camp of CROMWELL, overlooking the ravine, which is filled with mist. The early morning. CROMWELL, MONK, WHALLEY, and others.*

Monk. General, where's Lambert?

Crom. Ordering his line to right.

I wait for him.

Whal. Above St. Abb's Head, look,

A gleaming line shows where the sun will rise.

Crom. Why comes not Lambert? He should now

be here! [A trumpet sounds in the distance.]

Hark! 'tis the Scottish trumpet! They have moved.
Men, see you slip not on this sodden corn.

Whal. The mist is like a thinning curtain. Ah,
The enemy are pouring down the slope
Black dots, a shower of pebbles rolling down.

Crom. Ah, Lambert comes!

Enter LAMBERT.

God bless you, Cousin Whalley.

[Exit WHALLEY.]

Men, sound the charge—that turns my blood to
flame! [A peal of trumpets heard along the line.
Now let the cannon crash the trembling air.

[The roar of the cannon heard.
Forward!—Why hesitates that group beyond?

1st Sol. Sir, Corporal Grace-be-here exhorts his
men.

Crom. (advancing, puts his pistol to the Corporal's
head). Cease, or I fire.—Now cry, "The Lord
of hosts!"

[Shout. He charges, followed by his men.

SCENE IV. By the Brock. The armies engaged.
CROMWELL'S forces retreating. LAMBERT, WHALEY, and others.

Lamb. They drive us back!

Whal. No; Cromwell's foot comes on!

[The Scots begin to fall back.

Scot. Chapl. The day is ours; the cause of right is
proven!

Scot. Sol. Be still. We lose!

Scot. Chapl. Drive down the Philistine! Drive
Agag down!

Scot. Sol. Peace, owl! You urged this charge.
Our cause is lost! [He strikes him down.

SCENE V. *Another part of the field.* CROMWELL over-looking from an eminence the royalist army, among them CAPTAIN WILTSE.

Crom. Their power is broken. I profess they run!
On, on! The Lord of hosts! The Lord of hosts!

[*He descends and charges the enemy. All engage.*
Now are they made as stubble to our swords!
Spare not, but smite!

[*WILTSE is shot and falls by him.*

Wilt. Cromwell!

Crom. Hah, Wiltse! [*Bends over him.*

Wilt. Friend, I am not old,
But he that placed me here hath given command
That I have done my work. My daughter, sir!
There's none to care for her when I am gone.
The King is dead, I dare not trust his son!
O, save my child!

Crom. She shall be as mine own.
I will protect her.

Wilt. May God bless you, sir. [*Dies.*

Crom. Rally the force and make a general charge!

SCENE VI. *Another part of the field. WHALLEY fallen.*

Enter 1st Soldier.

Whal. Ho, there! My horse is down and I am hit!

How goes the day?

1st Sol. Won! won! The day is ours! You fell, sir, as the general charge was made. Ah, when we knew the instant's strain had come, That now upon our strength the battle hung, Our souls bent down with fear. We looked on him, Beheld our leader; hope within his breast Rose like a fiery pillar, and his form Seemed to dilate with power until he stood Genius of war, a certain conqueror. And then in us a fierce assurance woke. The darkness and the horror and the noise Were but the pæan of our victory. And even as we felt them giving way, The shining mist rode up to meet the clouds, And left the hill-coves bluer than the sky That spread behind the white fogs tossed in heaven. We saw our foes in wild confusion fly. To east in majesty from out the sea The sun arose; on Cromwell's silver locks

The first beams rested like an aureole.
And then above the roar we heard his voice:
“Let God arise, and let His enemies
Be scattered; even as the mist dissolves
So shall they flee before His presence!”

SCENE VII. *On the field of battle, strewn with the dead and dying. MONK, LAMBERT, and others still fighting to disperse a resisting remnant.*

Monk. There's slaughter in the rear, and flight before.

Lamb. Some fly to Copperspath, and many stamp
Across their own men.

Monk. Death to all who stand!

[*They charge the band of Scots, who fall.*
Enter CROMWELL and Soldiers.

Crom. Pause ere the chase proceeds; and unto
Him

To whom all praise belongeth, give ye praise.
Shout to the quaking heavens and bleeding earth
That in our midst the God of battles rides.

[*He starts, and all join.*

“O, praise the Lord, all ye nations! Praise Him
all ye people! For His merciful kindness is great to
usward, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.
Praise ye the Lord!”

ACT V

SCENE I. *A room in Whitehall. Enter from opposite sides JOHN CROMWELL and GERALD LEROY.*

J. Crom. Thou art but lately come from France, I think.

Leroy. Yes. After Worcester, fleeing with the King,

I followed him at length across the waves.

J. Crom. How doth his gracious Majesty?

Leroy. Not well.

I have learned many things in this brief time.

I left that court, nor shall it see me more.

J. Crom. Think not to find a tranquil resting here; Although our vessels conquer on the sea, A gathering danger menaces the land. The people grumble at the Parliament, Who, truth to say, sit on and do no work, And Cromwell—

Leroy. Ah!

J. Crom. Thou dost recall thy word?

Leroy. Ay. And the King hath urged me to the deed.

I should not wish to see Charles Stuart rule—

J. Crom. What!

Leroy. Think me not disloyal. It is true.
Yet if this monster, Cromwell, seizes power,
Then I will slay him.

J. Crom. Ah! thou wilt do well.
He bears his honors with so meek a face,
Ascribing all his victories to God
And to his army, that men wonder more
At his hypocrisy than at his luck.
But hast thou plans to do so great a deed?

Leroy. I shall go boldly to him in his house,
Reproach him with the horror of his crimes,
And strike him to the heart—even with this knife.

J. Crom. England will bless thy name forever more.

Come off with me and we will talk of this. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter CROMWELL and WHALLEY.

Whal. Cousin, your patience with this Parliament
Is past beyond a virtue. Hear you not
All England groaning under countless wrongs
Neglected, while they simmer in their chairs?

This Parliament has lived eleven years;
Called by Charles Stuart, can it serve for us?

Crom. Whalley, I have not sought the place I hold.

And since God called me, He will still support
His feeble servant, teaching me His will.
The commonwealth of England shall not fall!

Whal. Here cometh one you call your brother, sir,
He calls you brother and he smiteth you.

Enter SIR HARRY VANE and HARRISON.

Crom. (aside). O, that my dear son Ireton had not died!

Vane. Right glad am I to meet your lordship here.

Har. We wandered, speaking of a settlement
Of all the turmoils of the Commonwealth.

Vane. I argue, let us have no lords, no king,
No church established, be all conscience-free.

Crom. I hold there with thee; but this country's law

Without some form of monarchy scarce stands.

Har. No! We will have no ruler! none on earth!

Vane. Let us but turn our vision to one point,
Consider well how Christ would rule on earth,
And then shall nobler purposes arise
Within our breasts, spirits of truth and power

Spring up amongst us, ruling all things well!

Milton (without). Thou mayst return, my boy; this
is the room.

Vane. That sweet voice is our poet's.

Enter MILTON. VANE goes to him and takes his hand.

Welcome, friend.

Our Generals, Harrison and Cromwell, here,

Myself and Whalley, talk of future laws.

Crom. And Vane holds that the uses of the past
Should now be trampled fiercely under foot.

Milton. Were they but dust and ashes, good my
friends,

As long as they may still be serviceable
To polish and to clean truth's armory,
For that respect, then, cast them not away.—
I ask your pardon, all, but beg you, sirs,
To leave me with his lordship for a space.

Vane. Assuredly.

Whal. Good day, sir.

[*Exeunt VANE, WHALLEY, and HARRISON.*

Crom. Thank you, friend;
You spoke my very thoughts. You understand
How difficult and dangerous a path
Lies spread before us. Certain is it, now,
Unless some rapid remedy prevent,
The frame of government will surely fail.

Thou knowest that without some kingly power
The fabric of the law holds not its form;
We may not have a Stuart on the throne,
We must preserve the English Commonwealth,
And at a word of any ruling man
Come outcries that “ the free state will be crushed! ”

Milton. Go on thy way alone, and heed them not
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood;
License they mean when they cry liberty.

Crom. The Parliament is rotten to the core,
And struggling England pushes me to act.

Milton. And if the Parliament do not dissolve,
Or so arrange that they remain in power,
And thus shall give their deeds the force of law,
How will you then unsnarl the tangled skein?

Crom. The people’s welfare is the highest law.
I’ll draw my sword and cut the Gordian knot!

Milton. I trust your wisdom. I have come to say
What must be heard at first by you alone.
You know I late have finished the “ Defence ”?

Crom. Yes, and all England thanks you for your
work.

I heard it cost you pain as well as toil.
Well, we must rest those precious eyes a while.
A secretary—

Milton. Cromwell!

Crom. Why, my friend!

Milton. 'Tis on this very subject I would speak,
And yet the words I thought to say are hard.
Forgive the weakness, sir, which shrinks to show
What long it looked upon unflinchingly.

Crom. Milton! It cannot be— [Crosses to him.

Milton. Come here, my friend.

[He turns his face toward him and then walks falteringly away.

Crom. He sees me not!

[Goes to him and takes his hand.

Milton, there must be hope!

Milton. No. I was warned that if I used mine eyes
I should be blind, and now—the night is come.

Crom. Let me not think—this is too piteous—
Or I shall question of Thy justice, God!
You feared this coming. O, why spared you not
Your failing strength? Perchance you had been
saved!

Milton. No, Cromwell; when the choice before me
lay

Between my supreme duty and my sight,
I could not but obey that inward voice,
I know not what, that spoke to me from Heaven.
And in my soul rushed thoughts of sacrifice,
How others for their country gave sweet sight.

I therefore spent this quickly fading light
In my best work to aid the common weal.
And since that I have lost mine eyes, o'erplied
In liberty's defence, my noble task,
So much the rather thou, celestial light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, purge all mist and there plant eyes.
He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit in th' centre and enjoy bright day.

SCENE II. *The House of Commons.* *The Speaker in the chair.* MARTEN, BRADSHAW, and others. VANE speaking. HARRISON and LAMBERT seated R. F.

Lamb. You sent for Cromwell?

Har. Thrice; yet comes he not.

Lamb. Unless he hastes, the bill will soon be passed.

Enter CROMWELL and others, who take their seats quietly. CROMWELL sits L. F.

Crom. (to a Member). I come to do that which doth grieve my soul,

Yet must I do it for this nation's good.

Mem. I pray your deed may have a happy issue.

Vane (speaking). And therefore, gentlemen, in this exigency

We lay aside those customary forms
Which legal precedence would have us use,
And, pressing forward, hasten with this bill.

Lamb. (to HARRISON). He wishes you.

[HARRISON crosses to CROMWELL.

Crom. (to HARRISON). This Parliament is ripe for dissolution.

Now is the time!

Har. It is a dangerous work.

Consider yet a while.

Crom. You do say well.

Vane (continuing). Gentlemen, if our action be disliked,

And the great crowd, who know not what is best
Even for their proper welfare, rail at us,
We know that 'tis far better to endure
The highest contradiction from mankind
Than to deny the light of conscience.
This bill is for a free election, formed
For strengthening this Parliament, to serve
To aid and to protect the Commonwealth.

[He takes his seat.

Crom. (to HARRISON). He nears his end, and he has broken faith.

An instant, and the Speaker puts the question.
This is the time, and I must do it.

[He rises and removes his hat.]

Gentlemen, having had some occasion to see, together with my brothers and countrymen, a happy period put to our sharp wars and contests with the then common enemy, I hoped to have reaped the fruit and benefit, together with my brethren, of your and our hard labors and hazards; to wit, the enjoyment of peace and liberty and the privileges of a Christian and a man, in due equality with others, according as it should please the Lord to dispense unto me. And when, I say, God had put an end to our wars, or at least brought them to a very hopeful issue, very near the end—after Worcester fight—I came up to London to pay my service and duty to you, to congratulate you on your many and great services unto our country, upon your courage and fidelity, your wisdom and your foresight—which qualities have in the past been in you very worthy of congratulation. I came up to London, I say, hoping that all minds would be disposed to answer what seemed to me the mind of God. I was much disappointed of my expectation, for the issue did not prove so. I can say, in the simplicity of my soul, I love not—I love not to rake into these corruptions!

You were called here to save a nation—nations. You had the best people of the Christian world put into your trust. And what hath come of this? Dis-sentlement and division, discontent and dissatisfaction, together with real dangers to the whole, have been multiplied within the last years of your sitting. I must tell you this also: that poor men, under your arbitrary power, have been driven like flocks of sheep, by forty in a morning, to the confiscation of goods and estates, without any man being able to give a reason why two of them had deserved to forfeit a shilling. And my soul, and many persons whom I see in this place, were exceedingly grieved at these things, and knew not how to help them, except by our mournings and giving our negatives when occasion served.

I have pressed this Parliament, as a Member, to period themselves—once and again and ten, nay, twenty times over. I told you—for I knew it better than any one man in the Parliament could know it: because of my manner of life, which had led me everywhere up and down the nation, thereby giving me to know the temper and spirits of all men and of the best of men—that the nation loathed your sitting.

And that there is high cause for your dissolution is most evident; not only because there is a just fear

of this Parliament's perpetuating itself, but because such is actually your design! Yes, had not your heels been trod upon by importunities from abroad even to threats, I believe there would never be any thoughts of rising or of going out of this room to the world's end. I myself have been sounded, and, by no mean persons, *tempted*, and proposals made to me to this very end—that the Parliament might be perpetuated, the vacant places might be supplied by new elections, and so continue from generation to generation.

And I have to say that the injury of this Commonwealth, such as it is, so owned by God, so approved by men, were a thing which, in reference to the good of these nations and of posterity, I can sooner be willing to be rolled into my grave and buried with infamy than I can give my consent unto!

You have sufficiently imposed upon this people! You have long enough cheated your country by your sitting here under pretext of settling the Commonwealth and reforming the laws and procuring the common good; whilst, in the mean time, you have only invaded the wealth of the State and screwed yourselves and your relations into all places of honor and profit to feed your own luxury and impiety. The Lord hath

done with you, and hath chosen other instruments more worthy for the continuance of His work—

1st Mem. (interrupting). This is strange language; unusual within the walls of Parliament, this! And from a trusted servant, too, and one whom we have so highly honored, and one—

Crom. (interrupting). Come! come! We have had enough of this! I will put an end to your prating! [He claps on his hat, and stamping the floor, walks up and down.] It is not fit for you to sit here any longer!

1st Mem. (still standing). It ill suits your lordship's justice to brand us all promiscuously and in general, without the proof of a crime.

Crom. You are not Parliament. I say you are no Parliament! You shall now give place to better men. [To HARRISON.] Call them in!

[The doors are thrown open. Enter thirty musketeers.

Vane. This is not honest. Yea, it is against morality and common honesty!

Crom. O Sir Harry Vane! Sir Harry Vane! The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane! You call yourselves a Parliament. You are no Parliament. Some of you are drunkards. Some of you are unjust, corrupt persons [*he looks at several*], scandalous to the profession of the Gospel, living in open contempt

of God's commandments, following your own greedy appetites and the devil's commandments! [He advances and lifts the mace.] What shall we do with this fool's bauble? Here, take it away. [Gives it to a soldier.] [To HARRISON, pointing to Speaker.] Fetch him down.

Speak. I will not come down unless I be forced.

Har. Sir, I will lend you a hand.

[The Speaker descends. VANE remains sitting.

Crom. (pointing to VANE). Put him out.

[HARRISON and another place their hands on his shoulders. He rises.

Crom. O Sir Harry Vane! you might have prevented this, but you were a juggler and had not the common honesty! [To 1st Member.] You have enriched yourself by cozening the State, for which you shall be called to account. Take him, men! I seize this bill of dissolution. Guards, clear the house! [The members pass out.] It is you, you who have forced me to do this! For I have sought the Lord night and day that He would rather slay me than put me on the doing of this work!

SCENE III. *A room in Whitehall. Lights upon a table where lies CROMWELL'S Bible. Curtains at the back. A screen L. F.*

Enter a Servant, introducing GERALD LEROY.

Serv. His lordship will return directly, sir.

Leroy. 'Tis well. I'll wait. [Exit Servant.

This is his chamber, then.

A Bible! So, the hoary hypocrite!

Lesley hath said he saw him sell his soul

Unto the devil. And this is our king?

Not while my arm can strike! The Parliament

To-morrow purposes to give to him

The power supreme. 'Tis well; before that time

There are some twenty hours: to cause his death

Takes but one instant's action. Hark, he comes!

What if I watch awhile and mark that life

Which, some have told me, passes in strange crimes?

Then, like the blade of justice, could I strike!

[He steps behind the screen.

Enter CROMWELL as if very weary. He seats himself and opens the Bible. There is a slight noise without. He raises his head. A child's face appears between the curtains.

Fran. (calling). He's here! Come on!—Father, you're not at work?

Crom. (laying down the book). No, sweetheart. Ah, I heard my little mouse!

[She runs to him and climbs on his knee.

Where is the baby?

Fran. Betty brings her now.
And Mary Wiltse, too. O, here they come!

Enter MARY WILTSE and ELIZABETH CLAYPOLE, who has a child in her arms.

Leroy. Mary!

Crom. Ah, Mary!

[He holds out his hand. She comes across and kisses him.

Why, this is a troop!
I'm overwhelmed and captured by this force!

[He takes the child on his other knee.
What have my little wenches done all day?

Fran. O, Betty took us to the country, sir.

Eliz. And we ate nuts and apples.

Child. Lots of nuts!

Crom. And brought none home to father!

Fran. Yes, I did!

O, here it is. I took the shell off, see!

I'm 'fraid it's hurt.

Crom. Thank you, my little girl.

[*She puts the nut in his mouth. CROMWELL, laughing, tips the children back. They cling to him.*
Fran. You need not try to frighten us! We know
You would not let us fall for all the world!

Crom. Who told you so! Perhaps I should be
glad

To rid myself of two such nuisances!

[*The noise of the firing of a gun without.*

Mistr. Crom. (without). My son is shot! They have
slain my son!

Eliz. 'Tis grandmother. She fears each sudden
noise. [CROMWELL rises.

Enter MISTRESS CROMWELL, *supported by* HENRY
CROMWELL.

Mistr. Crom. O Oliver! My son! O, art thou
harmed?

Crom. No, mother, no! Why, come and sit you
down.

'Twas but some random shot. Come, rest awhile.

[*He assists her to his chair.*

Mistr. Crom. (feeling him). Thou art not wounded,
Noll? O, son, son, son,
Hadst thou but listened to me, and come not
Into this dangerous power—

Henry Crom. (impatiently). Why, grandmother,
You know how—

Crom. Peace, my son! Say on, my mother.
What is your thought?

Mistr. Crom. No; I will say no more.
O, Noll, mine eyes grow dim. You stand so far
I scarce can see your outlines!

Crom. (*extending his arms*). Plainer now?
Nay, this is better!

[*He kneels with his arms around her.*
Mistr. Crom. (*placing her hand on his head*). May
God bless thee, boy!

Crom. Come, we will all escort you safely back,
And then my little girls will stay awhile,
For Mr. Milton comes on business soon.

[*MISTRESS CROMWELL rises and goes out accompanied by all but MARY.*

Leroy (*coming forward*). Mary!

Mary. O Gerald! Love! O, is it thou?
O, I have longed for thee! How cam'st thou here?

Leroy. But thou, whom I have sought for, here!
With him!

Mary. Yes, here, with Cromwell. When my father
fell,

He asked the General to protect his child.

Leroy. O Mary, countless questions tear my mind!
The joy to see you makes my reason whirl;
And, heavy with a bliss I scarce can bear,

The overfreighted minutes weigh like pain.

Mary. I cannot now believe that thou are here.
It seems that the sweet dream I saw so oft
But mocks me once again. O, sing, my own,
For thy belovèd voice will calm my soul!

Leroy. This is the song that on the eve of fight
I sung at Worcester. 'Tis a soldier's love:

SOLDIER'S LOVE SONG.

As where the crags seem toppling from the sky,
 Rent by the lightning, girdled by the storm,
Awful and barren, blasted from on high,
 There springs in fluttering grace the harebell's
 form.

Thus, in this day of clanging, strident strife,
 Anguish and slaughter fierce and dark above,
O'er the abyss and precipice of life,
 Here, here hath sprung the blossom of my loye.

Mary. O, happiness, come with thy voice once
 more!

Leroy (aside). This word of death hath summoned
 me to life!

I had forgot my work. What shall I say?
I cannot understand—there's some mistake.
When Cromwell comes again, my chance is gone.

What I have heard was from his enemies;
What I have seen—perhaps his o'erwrought soul
Shook hard the pillars of his thronèd sense?
Exhausted nature oft plays frantic tricks.

Mary. What troubles you, my love? O, speak to
me!

Leroy. Time flows like water hastening to a fall!
Tell me: this Cromwell is an evil man?

Mary. No, no! My kindest guardian!

Leroy. Strange, strange, strange!
O, that I had a wise man's counsel now!

Enter CROMWELL.

Mary (taking the hand of LEROY). Sir, this is he
that I have told you of,
Gerald Leroy.

Crom. I'm glad to see you, sir.

Enter MILTON.

Milton. Is General Cromwell here?

Crom. Yes, noble friend.

[*He goes across and takes MILTON's hand.*

Mary (to LEROY). That is the poet Milton, wisest
man

In all this country.

Leroy. I will speak to him. [*Advances.*

Crom. (to MILTON). Here is a brother poet, young
Leroy. [Milton holds out his hand.

Leroy (kissing his hand). Sir, may I beg an instant's
speech apart? [CROMWELL goes back to MARY.

My master, now the longed-for time is come
That I behold you! In your wisdom, sir,
I pray you tell a half-distracted soul,
Is it not clear against all law and right
That Cromwell, low-born man, should be our king?

Milton. He is not king. But laying that aside,
Art thou so far behind the march of thought
That thou art ignorant how slight a thing
Is what you call nobility of birth?
O poet, lay this saying to thy heart:
Who bears a royal soul alone is king!

Leroy. But Cromwell seemed to me a turncoat,
oft!

Milton. You saw a ship that tacked and shifted
sail,
You could not see by what she steered her course;
Not by ambition's flaming meteor guided,
But by the fixèd star of patriotism.

[CROMWELL returns.

Leroy. Cromwell! I am not mad, though I have
cause.

I came here with intent to take thy life.

Not evil, sir, so much as ignorant.
Do with me as you will.

[Kneels. *Draws his knife and gives it to CROMWELL.*

Through all my days
The thought will torture me,—but for slight chance
I should have killed thee, thinking I did well.

Crom. My boy, I read repentance in thy face.
Thou hast been harmed by evil counsellors.
Wilt thou be faithful in the future?

Leroy. Sir!
I swear to serve you!
Crom. Thou hast gone far wrong,
But thou art young and I will comfort thee;
See, child. [Opens his coat and shows complete mail.

I am too precious to my country
To lose my life by some fanatic's blade!

Leroy. O, sir, I thank you!
Crom. Go with Mary, boy.
[*Exeunt LEROY and MARY.*

This is but one; their plots are numberless.
“Mine enemies encompass me about!”

Milton. Yet like a mount you stand, which puny
men
Seek to degrade by mines, and piercing deep
They shake not thee, but on their foolish heads

Bring down o'erwhelming weight that buries them.

Crom. Ah, Milton, let them pass. I must not die;
My work is scarce begun, as thou shalt see.
These nations that look on with eyes askance
Shall learn our strength, shall change from doubt to
praise,

And in respectful posture ask our grace.

Then commerce shall unfurl her myriad sails,
And states be linked by golden chains of trade.
The world shall know, as once beneath that Queen,
Elizabeth, of glorious memory,
What England is! And we shall learn at home
How great it is to be an Englishman!
And find that higher privilege as well—
That we are Christians. Seek true liberty,
The liberty of conscience, on which rock
This English Commonwealth shall rear its might.
It were hypocrisy if we that prayed
For freedom for ourselves denied it now
To others. Tolerance intolerant,
And freedom forging chains: what sin were this,
To ask of Heaven a gift we would not give!
And yet what fierce contention will ensue!
For many now do hate me for such words;
I am rebuked and censured every way.
They call this tolerance “The devil’s plan,

His masterpiece, the death-blow to the Church.”
Well, I have lived in fire—God will not fail.
And yet one bruise there is that pains me sore:
I have no armor that protects my heart.
Milton, my friends have left me, one by one.
Young Harry Vane, that I have loved so well,
And Marten, Harrison, and Hutchinson,
My dear old comrades, have deserted me.
And I grow old and weary of this strife.
My life has been a willing sacrifice,
I hope, for all; yet am I tired to-night.
The weight of England is upon me now,
Burden too heavy for a man to bear.

Milton. I too am weary; and my spirit cries,
“O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse,
Without all hope of day!
O first-created Beam, and Thou, great Word,—
‘Let there be light, and light was over all’;—
Why am I thus bereaved Thy prime decree?”
Hast thou heard, Cromwell, what Salmasius wrote?
That these mine eyes were loathsome to the sight?
The day shall come when it will be his claim,
His only claim for notice from the world,
That Milton too much honored him by scorn!
It is not true—that word—about mine eyes?

Crom. No! Milton, they are clear of outward spot.

Milton. Lead me unto thine organ. Let me hear Music, that brings all heaven before mine eyes.

[MILTON plays.

SCENE IV. *The Chancery Court, Westminster.* At the upper end an ascent raised where are set a chair and canopy of state, a chair for the Speaker, with seats built scaffoldwise for the Parliament on both sides, and places below for the Aldermen of London and others.

Enter a Herald, the Aldermen of London in scarlet gowns, another Herald, the Attorney-General, then the Judges, then the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury with the seal, then the Garter, then the Lord Mayor with the city sword, then OLIVER CROMWELL, followed by JOHN MILTON and many officers, three of whom stand upon a lower descent with drawn swords. CROMWELL stands upon the left hand of the chair, uncovered.

The Speaker (advancing, to CROMWELL). I give into your hands this robe of purple, Emblem of magistracy, which imports, By its mixed hues, justice and righteousness;

This Bible, holding highest rules of law;
This sceptre, truly not unlike a staff,
That you may be a staff unto the weak;
This sword, of civil not of warlike power,
That you, Protector, may protect the state.

Crom. (taking the parchment bearing the instrument of government). I promise, in the presence of our God,

Not to infringe the matters of this model;
In all things to the best of my belief
To govern in accordance with the laws,
Administering justice to seek peace.

[*He kisses the book.*

Milton (advancing upon the steps of the throne and taking the hand of CROMWELL). Cromwell, there now is given unto thee

The dignity supreme over thy fellows,
To govern by thy counsels three great powers,
And to recall this people unto Him
The every thought of Whom should be a prayer.
Within thine inmost soul consider well
How dear a pledge, and from how dear a parent,
Is in thy keeping—this gift liberty;
The giver, thy country. In my mind I see
A noble and puissant nation rise
Like to a strong man rousing after sleep,

And as an eagle mew her mighty young,
Kindling undazzled eyes in noonday light.
I stand upon a high o'erlooking hill
And see the future spreading out beneath.
Poor England, rent with earthquake-shocks of war,
Fear thou no longer; green below me here
Thy pastures spring to life, and wrap with bloom
The blood-stained ground; in place of whirling balls
The steady plow alone shall cut the soil.
Ah! Close beyond, behold a darkening sky;
The sun involved in clouds, the thunder rolls
Throughout the valley, where the thick white fog
Lies like a serpent coiling in the clefts.
A fetid vapor blows across the sea,
The heated air grows pestilent and foul.
Again my vision strengthens. On before
I look between the parted line of hills:
The heavy sky is shattered by a sea
Of silver billows, and the shafts of light
Strike on the distant plain; far, far beyond
The dim blue hills in mellow radiance lie,
A glow of palest amber and of pearl!
I know not where—my spirit faints and reels—
Futurity breaks on me, and my mind,
Transported, soars above the wheeling poles.
England, thy child shall rise from out the sea,

From out the western sea shall she arise,
Full-formed like Venus, beautiful and strong!
And liberty shall girdle her about
Even as the turquoise air: and beaming peace,
Come in the fulness of the time of power,
Shall set her bright feet on the purpling hills,
And shine like day upon a waiting world;
And justice shall appear, to rule this land—
Justice, hid long and long profaned, now seen
As glorious as the ocean in the sun.

The weary and oppressed of every race
Shall turn their bruised feet unto her shores,
And on her ample bosom grow in strength.
Lo, a great sound shall come across the tide,
For, gazing backward in the gloom of time,
This people sees thee, Cromwell, thee whose hand
Still struck for liberty whene'er it fell;
And they shall know and praise their parentage,
Born of the tree that thou hast made so great,
Born of thy sturdy stock, the Puritan.
And holding unto thee their thankful hands,
A mighty nation rises crying “CROMWELL!”

[*The Heralds blow their trumpets.*

SEP 20 1900

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 988 837 A

